

Table 12 Summary Comparison of Alternatives			
RESOURCES			
No Action (Alternative A)	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D
Air Quality			
<p>Goal – Meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards and the requirements of the Clean Air Act with all authorized actions.</p> <p>Management Common to All Alternatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Activities on BLM lands would be conducted in a manner that achieves the <i>Western Montana Standards for Rangeland Health</i> to ensure air quality meets State standards.</li><li>Incorporate mitigation measures to minimize air quality degradation into project proposals as necessary, especially prescribed burn treatments.</li><li>Participate in state and tribal smoke management programs in accordance with the EPA <i>Interim Air Quality Policy for Wildland and Prescribed Fires</i> (April 1998).</li><li>Coordinate with Montana/Idaho Airshed Group and MT DEQ and obtain appropriate permits for prescribed burning.</li></ul>			

March 2004

<b><i>Cultural Resources</i></b>				
<b>Goal 1 – Preserve and protect significant cultural resources and ensure that they are available for appropriate uses by present and future generations.</b>				
<b>Management Common to All Alternatives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor a minimum of 10 previously recorded cultural resources (allocated to the Conservation for Future and/or Traditional Use categories) per year to update the site form to current professional standards and to assess the current condition and trend of significant resource values.</li> <li>Prepare nomination packages for Everson Creek and Muddy Creek archaeological districts to formally list on the National Register of Historic Places.</li> </ul>				
	1. Prepare and implement cultural resource management plans for Everson Creek, Muddy Creek, Sheep Creek Wickiup, and Virginia City Historic District.  2. See ACEC section for discussion on cultural values of Beaverhead Rock, Everson Creek, Lewis and Clark Trail, Muddy Creek/Big Sheep Creek, and Virginia City Historic District potential ACECs.	1. Prepare and implement cultural resource management plans on a case-by-case basis as needed.  2. Same as A.	1. Same as B.  2. Same as A.	1. Same as B.  2. Same as A.
<b>Goal 2 – Reduce imminent threats from natural or human-caused deterioration, or potential conflict with other resource uses, by identifying priority geographic areas for new field inventory, based upon a probability for unrecorded significant resources.</b>				
<b>Management Common to All Alternatives: None</b>				
	1. Conduct inventory in the following priority areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ruby Mountains</li> <li>Centennial Mountains and Continental Divide</li> <li>Axolotl Lakes area</li> <li>West End—Lima Reservoir</li> <li>Moore Creek and East Virginia City Hill</li> <li>Rochester area</li> <li>Iron Rod area</li> <li>South Clark Canyon-North Tendoy Mountains</li> <li>Blacktail Ridge</li> <li>Sweetwater Mountains</li> <li>East Pioneer Foothills</li> <li>Little Pioneer Foothills</li> <li>Little Basin Creek and foothills</li> <li>Glendale Area</li> </ul>	1. Conduct inventory of 400 acres annually based on a stratified random sample.	1. Conduct inventory of 800 acres annually based on a stratified random sample.	1. Conduct inventory as time allows using a stratified random sample and focusing on high priority areas.

**Goal 3 – Ensure that all authorizations for land and resource use avoid inadvertent damage to federal and non-federal cultural resources in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for all federal undertakings.
- Avoid impacts to significant cultural resources by project redesign, project abandonment and/or mitigation of adverse impacts through data recovery/alternative means as a last resort.
- Manage historic mining properties in accordance with programmatic agreement between BLM, Forest Service, and the Montana SHPO or with procedures as amended to BLM-SHPO Protocol Agreement.

**Goal 4 – Promote stewardship, conservation, and appreciation of cultural resources through educational and public outreach programs in accordance with the BLM Heritage Education program.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Prepare cultural resource awareness programs designed to enhance the public appreciation of cultural resource values that will include educational lectures/presentations as well as interpretive displays and scientific use of cultural resources by university field schools.

**Goal 5 – Consult with Native Americans to identify any of their cultural values or religious beliefs that may be affected by BLM authorizations or actions.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Conduct legally required consultations with federally recognized Indian tribes as sovereign nations in a government-to-government relationship with the United States.

## Fish and Wildlife

### Fish

**Goal 1 – Manage habitat for resident coldwater species that are of high economic, social, or scientific values.**

**Goal 2 – Ensure that aquatic habitat is of suitable quality to support a diversity of plant and animal communities.**

#### Desired Future Condition (after 20 years of management)

- Streams that have sufficient flows provide habitat diversity and conditions that support cold-water fisheries:
  - A diversity of instream habitat structure is present.
  - Composition and quantity of streambed materials are appropriate for site potential.
  - Riparian vegetation and stream channel morphology contribute to maintaining appropriate water temperatures (generally <70° F).
  - Macroinvertebrate diversity and abundance reflect high water quality.

#### Management Common to All Alternatives:

- Coordinate with FWP on fisheries introduction proposals and concerns over fishing regulations.
- Encourage compatible maintenance work on irrigation diversion structures.
- Work with adjoining landowners to enhance fisheries habitat.
- Initiate and perform long-term fish habitat and water quality surveys to document and monitor trends in fishery habitat.
- Coordinate with private entities to modify dams or outlets on Axolotl Lake, Reservoir Lake, and Twin Lakes that will maintain a residual pool and prevent complete drainage.
- Maintain habitat suitable for native westslope cutthroat trout in Sheep Creek tributaries for preservation of the genotype and their unique values as relict representatives of the native fauna.
- Improve the habitat quality in Sheep Creek for production of game fisheries resulting in improved fish condition and increased numbers.
- Initiate habitat restoration on fishery streams that are not in proper functioning condition.
- Coordinate with FWP to manage beaver where site-specific assessments have identified concerns with beaver presence or absence in relation to fish habitat.

	<p>1. Manage fish habitat in a manner that will achieve the <i>Western Montana Standards for Rangeland Health</i>.</p> <p>2. No related action.</p> <p>3. No related action.</p> <p>4. Implement habitat improvement projects where site-specific assessments have identified habitat concerns on fishery streams.</p>	<p>1. Same as A, but in addition manage Class I (blue ribbon) fish habitat and WCT habitat to achieve potential or an upward trend within 15 years.</p> <p>2. Protect concentrated spawning areas in 99% and above WCT streams.</p> <p>3. Pursue water leasing and improved water management to benefit fisheries values in coordination with FWP for Class 1 (blue ribbon) streams.</p> <p>4. Same as A, but focus on projects to increase components of large woody debris in deficient streams to improve fish habitat.</p>	<p>1. Manage habitat containing fish values to achieve potential or an upward trend within 10 years.</p> <p>2. Protect WCT spawning and fry emergence between April 15 and August 15.</p> <p>3. Pursue water leasing and improved water management to benefit fisheries values in coordination with FWP for fisheries streams.</p> <p>4. Same as A, but focus on increase in the amount of security cover available to fish species.</p>	<p>1. Same as A, but in addition manage WCT habitat to achieve potential or an upward trend in 15 years.</p> <p>2. No related action.</p> <p>3. Pursue water leasing and improved water management to benefit fisheries values in coordination with FWP for perennial streams with special status species.</p> <p>4. Same as B.</p>
--	--	--	--	---

<b>Wildlife</b>				
<p><b>Goal - Ensure that native wildlife species are provided habitat of sufficient quantity and quality to enhance biological diversity and sustain their ecological, economic and social values. Improve public awareness, understanding and support for resolving issues surrounding wildlife species conservation, management and ecology.</b></p> <p><b>Desired Future Condition (after 20 years of management):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A full spectrum of biological communities, habitats, and their ecological processes is present.</li> <li>• Populations of native plants and animals are well-distributed across the landscape.</li> </ul> <p><b>Management Common to All Alternatives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide habitat and forage to support wildlife population goals in current FWP big game management plans</li> <li>• Evaluate and revise Hidden Pasture Bighorn and Blacktail HMPs, and Red Rock Waterfowl, Sheep Creek Aquatic, Axolotl Lakes, and Wall Creek HMPs, and implement all remaining habitat project objectives as necessary within five years.</li> <li>• Manage wetland habitat in the Centennial Valley under the Red Rock Waterfowl HMP to enhance habitat conditions with emphasis on maximizing opportunities to reestablish and maintain trumpeter swan occupancy.</li> <li>• Coordinate all proposed vegetation treatment projects with FWP.</li> <li>• Install and maintain functional wildlife access ramps on all water tanks on public lands.</li> <li>• Modify fences on BLM identified as barriers to wildlife movement and require new construction to follow “wildlife friendly” fence specifications in BLM Manual Handbook H-1741-1.</li> <li>• Implement wetland based initiatives for waterfowl and wetland dependent species.</li> <li>• Coordinate with FWP to manage beaver where site-specific assessments have identified concerns with beaver presence or absence in riparian-wetland habitats for wildlife.</li> <li>• Maintain current exclosures free from livestock grazing, ensure routine maintenance is completed annually on all exclosures before livestock turnout, and monitor to compare differences between areas grazed and ungrazed by livestock.</li> </ul>				
<i>Coniferous Forest Habitats</i>	<p>1. Analyze big game cover needs on a case-by-case basis for any proposed projects in forested habitat. Maintain cover values to provide security and thermal cover for elk and mule deer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider stand structure, density and snag retention necessary to meet wildlife needs in timber harvest and forest health operations.</li> </ul> <p>2. Evaluate new road proposals on a case-by-case basis and apply measures to minimize wildlife displacement/ disturbance and habitat fragmentation, including but not limited to seasonal travel restrictions and restoration measures.</p>	<p>1. Minimize big game displacement by limiting sustained vegetation treatment activities to no more than two adjacent 6<sup>th</sup> order hydrologic units at a time. Maintain adjoining units as disturbance-free as possible during operations.</p> <p>2. When assessing new road proposals, one mile open road per square mile would be a target road density within a project level cumulative effects area.</p>	<p>1. Provide security cover for big game within forested habitat types by maintaining 250 acre core blocks within 6<sup>th</sup> order hydrologic units.</p> <p>2. Same as B.</p>	<p>1. Same as B.</p> <p>2. Same as A.</p>

	<p>3. No related action.</p> <p>4. Allow no timber harvest activities in portions of the following areas to protect wildlife values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shaw Basin</li> <li>• Noble Creek</li> <li>• North End of the Tendoy</li> <li>• Divide Creek</li> </ul> <p>5. Maintain cattle as primary class of livestock on mountain mahogany habitat. Sheep grazing on mountain mahogany habitats will be mitigated through specific grazing treatments, or where necessary, eliminated.</p> <p>6. No related action.</p> <p>7. No related action.</p>	<p>3. No related action.</p> <p>4. Enhance open-forest habitat for dependent species by maximizing Douglas-fir treatment unit size within the limits of topography and stand size. Give first priority to areas where reduced forest canopy could enhance bighorn reestablishment or expansion, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— southern Ruby Mtns</li> <li>— south Tobacco Root Mtns</li> <li>— Barton/Alder Gulch</li> </ul> <p>5. Same as A.</p> <p>6. No related action.</p> <p>7. No related action.</p>	<p>3. Ensure that forest treatment projects that could influence riparian habitat are conducted, or coordinated with riparian improvement projects, to minimize or eliminate any potential for degradation of riparian or aquatic habitat.</p> <p>4. Emphasize forest treatments in dry Douglas-fir types to increase palatable herbaceous and shrub compositions.</p> <p>5. Maintain cattle only as the class of livestock on all mountain mahogany habitat types unless those areas can be retired and closed to grazing.</p> <p>6. Restrict salvage treatments to &lt;40 acres in size. Leave a minimum of 30% of standing dead trees in patches.</p> <p>7. Restore mountain mahogany as the dominant vegetation type where Douglas-fir canopy is &gt;15% and has overtopped mountain mahogany stands. Focus areas include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barton Gulch/ Idaho Creek</li> <li>• Canyon Creek/Big Hole</li> <li>• Big Sheep Creek</li> <li>• Hells Canyon.</li> </ul>	<p>3. No related action.</p> <p>4. No related action.</p> <p>5. Same as A.</p> <p>6. No related action.</p> <p>7. No related action.</p>
--	--	---	--	--

<p>78</p> <p><i>Sagebrush Steppe Habitats</i></p>	<p>1. Implement the national and Montana sage grouse conservation strategies as the basis to address sage grouse needs during watershed planning processes and project level analysis.</p> <p>2. Assure the availability of quality herbaceous cover and forage for wildlife species within moist meadow and sagebrush swales on a case-by-case basis by implementing utilization recommendations or other management actions.</p>	<p>1. Same as A.</p> <p>2. Manage sagebrush habitats so that 70% or more of potential big sagebrush communities provide the vegetation composition and structure capable of supporting sage grouse and other wildlife species that use sagebrush habitat (Class 3-5). Habitat classifications are discussed in <b>Appendix D</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage for &gt;5% sagebrush canopy (Class 3, 4, or 5 conditions) on sage grouse breeding and winter habitat. Approx. 60-70% of the habitat (approx. 300,000 acres of mountain shrub and xeric shrub habitat types) should have &gt;15% sagebrush canopy (Class 4 and 5).</li> <li>• Manage for at least 30% canopy of perennial native grasses and forbs on all sage grouse breeding habitats, with an average 7" height of residual and/or current year's herbaceous plant growth present May 15 through July 1.</li> </ul> <p>Focus wildfire suppression efforts on large Class 3 or 4 stands of sagebrush that are isolated from other dense stands.</p>	<p>1. Implement the national and Montana sage grouse conservation strategies, and sage grouse guidelines as standards.</p> <p>2. Manage sagebrush habitats to provide suitable seasonal habitat for sage grouse as described in the Montana sagebrush/sage grouse habitat assessment protocol (supplement to the Montana sage grouse conservation strategy). Specific vegetation canopy and density objectives will be developed at the activity planning level (fine scale).</p>	<p>1. Same as A.</p> <p>2. No related action.</p>
---	--	--	---	---

<p><i>Riparian-Wetland Habitats</i></p>	<p>3. Forego activities such as prescribed burning, spraying, and mechanical alteration in sagebrush habitat that is important for wildlife species.</p> <p>4. No related action.</p> <p>1. See Riparian Vegetation section.</p> <p>2. Protect axolotl habitat by excluding grazing, timber harvest, and wheeled vehicle use in the Blue Lake area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage for &gt;15% sagebrush canopy (Class 4 or 5) on at least 40% of sage grouse summer/fall and mule deer/ antelope winter habitats (approx. 107,000 acres of mountain shrub and xeric shrub habitat types).</li> </ul> <p>3. See Bullet #2 above.</p> <p>4. Enhance bighorn sheep habitat suitability in currently occupied habitat by reducing or eliminating competing uses and disturbance factors.</p> <p>1. See Riparian Vegetation section.</p> <p>2. Same as A.</p>	<p>3. Sagebrush habitats providing sage grouse, mule deer and antelope winter range would develop within site potential without manipulation treatments (prescribed burning, spraying, mechanical treatment, etc).</p> <p>4. Same as B.</p> <p>1. See Riparian Vegetation section.</p> <p>2. Same as A, but also withdraw the Axolotl Lakes watershed, including Blue Lake, from locatable mineral entry.</p>	<p>3. Treat no more than 30% of Class 4 and 5 sagebrush stands within 20 years across all ownerships. Do not increase livestock stocking rates in vegetation treatment areas.</p> <p>4. No related action.</p> <p>1. See Riparian Vegetation section.</p> <p>2. Same as A.</p>
---	---	--	---	--



*Geologic Resources*

**Goal –Provide opportunities for use of the geology of the area while protecting resource values.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Post and protect the geologic features of Wedding Ring Rock (also known as Lime Kiln Arch), Squirrel Rock, and Road Agents Rock and pursue the withdrawal of each location from mineral entry to preserve the geological features.
- Manage the geological features formed by Nemesis Mountain and Sheep Mountain as part of the Centennial Mountains WSA.

	1. See ACEC section for discussion on geologic values of Block Mountain potential ACEC.	1. Same as A.	1. Same as A.	1. Same as A.
--	---	---------------	---------------	---------------

***Paleontological Resources***

**Goal 1—Preserve and protect significant paleontological resources and ensure that they are available for appropriate uses by present and future generations.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Maintain an inventory of paleontological sites and localities.
- Require permits for individuals or institutions conducting paleontological investigations for vertebrate fossils on public lands and insure that fossils remain in Federal ownership in perpetuity.
- Establish a long term monitoring program at known paleontological locales to assess potential adverse impacts; and mitigate adverse impacts as appropriate.
- Monitor a minimum of one locality per year.

	1. See ACEC section for discussion of paleontologic values in Centennial Valley Wetlands potential ACEC.	1. Same as A.	1. Same as A.	1. Same as A.
--	--	---------------	---------------	---------------

**Goal 2—Ensure that proposed land uses initiated or authorized by BLM avoid inadvertent damage to federal and non-federal paleontological resources.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Prior to projects that may result in surface or sub-surface disturbance, conduct an inventory for vertebrate paleontological resources in conjunction with the inventory for cultural resources.
- Comply with various federal regulations for the protection of paleontological remains by avoiding impacts to paleontological remains through project redesign, project abandonment, and/or mitigation of adverse impacts through scientific recovery and analysis.

**Goal 3—Promote the stewardship, conservation, and appreciation of paleontological resources through appropriate educational and public outreach programs.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Prepare paleontological resource awareness programs designed to enhance the public appreciation of paleontological resource values.
- Encourage scientific use of paleontological resources by university field schools.

**Soils**

**Goal –Maintain or improve soil health and fertility, prevent or minimize erosion and compaction, and reduce the possibility of mass wasting on unstable soils, while supporting multiple use.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Maintain canopy cover determined necessary to protect unstable soils.
- Surface disturbance associated with timber harvest will be allowed on unstable soils if acceptable techniques are applied to mitigate the possible negative effects of mass wasting.
- Address isolated slumps on a site-by-site basis, based upon intensity of disturbance proposed.
- Require detailed engineering design and geologic analysis in areas of suspected instability and require mitigation plans.
- Diagnose soil compaction and erosion problems using the *Western Montana Standards for Rangeland*.
- Use appropriate mitigation or place seasonal restrictions on activities authorized by BLM in areas with significant soil compaction or erosion.

March 2004

### ***Special Status Species—General***

**Goal—Improve or provide habitat to bring listed and candidate species that use public lands to population levels at which the measures required by the Endangered Species Act are no longer necessary so that species are downlisted or recovered.**

**Desired Future Condition (after 20 years of management)**

- Special status wildlife, fish and plant species and habitats are distributed across the landscape at levels appropriate to reduce or eliminate the need for their special status management.

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Ensure habitat is provided for special status species and proposed actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of a threatened or endangered species, or cause its habitat to be adversely modified or destroyed.
- Continue cooperative participation in recovery plans, management plans, and conservation strategies for special status species.
- Use individual species conservation strategies to design habitat strategies that will promote conservation of as many other wildlife species as possible.
- Enhance, restore and maintain habitat conditions and availability for special status species, and prevent all avoidable loss of habitat.
- Manage special status species habitats and populations using multi-scale assessments to identify current conditions, risks and opportunities.

## *Special Status Species—Animals*

**Goal – Ensure the long-term, self-sustaining persistence of special status animal species in the Dillon Field Office.**

**Desired Future Condition (after 20 years of management)**

- Manage wetland habitats to support a healthy diversity and abundance of dependent wildlife species
- Manage forested and sagebrush habitat within the historic range of variability for vegetation, composition, canopy and structure to support a diversity and abundance of dependent wildlife species, with emphasis on special status species needs.
- Provide suitable habitat and condition to allow wildlife, species movement between large blocks of habitat, and seasonal and special habitats on a localized and landscape scale.

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Cooperative implementation and monitoring of recovery plans, State of Montana management plans, and conservation strategies would continue for bald eagle, peregrine falcon , grizzly bear, wolf, Canada lynx and sage grouse.
- Manage special status species habitat to minimize disturbance and displacement due to authorizations and activities, particularly during breeding seasons.
- Continue to gather habitat and population data to enhance management effectiveness, with emphasis on migratory birds, amphibian and reptiles, and bats.
- Implement habitat improvement or restoration projects to enhance the distribution and availability of special status species. Prioritize habitat projects where fragmentation and risks to the security of special status species is highest.
- Allow no net loss of overall distribution and quality of sagebrush and wetland habitats, recognizing that short-term, localized losses may occur through management activities.
- Wetland habitat in the Centennial Valley would be managed to enhance residual nesting cover, water availability, and create additional wetland habitat with emphasis on maximizing opportunities to reestablish and maintain trumpeter swan occupancy.
- Coordinate with APHIS-Wildlife Services to monitor annual damage control effects and resolution of livestock depredation in accordance with the APHIS-BLM Master Memorandum of Understanding and the 1997 Predator Damage Management Plan for western Montana.

1. Consider impacts to wildlife movement and migration on a case-by-case basis during project planning and implementation.

1. Maintain or enhance dispersal/migration corridors for special status species and general wildlife movement as shown on **Map 3** and use prescribed conservation measures to evaluate grizzly bear, wolf and lynx needs and risk factors (road density, food storage, livestock conflicts, etc.) when issuing use authorizations within suitable BLM habitat

1. Same as B, except that additional management actions would apply.

1. Same as A.

	<p>2. No related action.</p> <p>3. No related action.</p> <p>4. Consider impacts to migratory birds on a case-by-case basis during implementation and project planning.</p>	<p>2. See #1 above.</p> <p>3. Monitor East Fork of the Blacktail and South Madison campgrounds and Axolotl Lakes area for food storage conflicts with grizzly bear and mitigate problems when they occur.</p> <p>4. Implement the North American Bird Conservation Initiative to restore, enhance and maintain habitats for all birds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern for Bird Conservation Region 10 for consideration in project biological evaluations.</li> <li>• Emphasize restoration and maintenance of habitats that sustain sensitive species with a minimum of disturbance during spring breeding seasons.</li> </ul>	<p>2. See #1 above.</p> <p>3. Same as B.</p> <p>4. Implement the North American Bird Conservation Initiative to restore, enhance and maintain habitats for all birds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern for Bird Conservation Region 10 for consideration in project biological evaluations.</li> <li>• Emphasize restoration and maintenance of habitats that sustain sensitive species with a minimum of disturbance during spring breeding seasons.</li> <li>• Restore habitat composition and structure that has been lost or reduced on grazing allotments where upland and riparian rangeland health standards are not being met.</li> </ul>	<p>2. Use prescribed conservation measures to evaluate grizzly bear, wolf and lynx needs and risk factors (road density, food storage, livestock conflicts, etc.) when issuing use authorizations within suitable BLM habitat in the Grizzly Bear use areas outside of the Yellowstone Recovery Zone (primarily Centennial Valley and East Fork of the Blacktail) depicted on <b>Map 5</b>.</p> <p>3. Same as B.</p> <p>4. Same as A.</p>
--	---	---	---	---

<p>5. Consider impacts to bats on a case-by-case basis during project planning and implementation.</p> <p>6. Consider impacts to pygmy rabbits on a case-by-case basis during project planning and implementation.</p> <p>7. Consider impacts to raptors on a case-by-case basis during project planning and implementation.</p> <p>8. See ACEC section for discussion on special status species within the Centennial Mountains, Centennial Valley Wetlands, and Ferruginous Hawk Nesting Area potential ACECs.</p>	<p>5. Same as A.</p> <p>6. Same as A, but also emphasize protection of dense sagebrush patches (Class 3-5 stands) within occupied pygmy rabbit habitat.</p> <p>7. Same as A, but also maintain ferruginous hawk habitat suitability within the Lima Foothills and Sweetwater Breaks key raptor management areas. Protect nesting structures, maintain sagebrush/grassland interspersions and enhance prey abundance in these areas.</p> <p>Evaluate proposed activities for potential disturbance during the breeding season, and limit sustained activities March 1 through September 1 within 1/2 mile of nest sites on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>8. Same as A.</p>	<p>5. Same as A, but also initiate bat inventory and monitoring to identify area-wide occurrence, distribution and population risks.</p> <p>6. Same as B, but also develop a conservation strategy/HMP for pygmy rabbit management that identifies habitat suitability, risk factors and management strategies.</p> <p>7. Same as A, but also maintain raptor breeding habitat suitability across the planning area. Protect nesting structures, maintain or enhance vegetation diversity, and enhance prey abundance.</p> <p>Evaluate proposed activities for potential disturbance during the breeding season, and limit sustained activities March 1 through September 1 within one mile of nest sites on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>8. Same as A.</p>	<p>5. Same as A.</p> <p>6. Same as A.</p> <p>7. Same as B.</p> <p>8. Same as A.</p>
--	--	---	---

## *Special Status Species–Fish*

**Goal – Ensure the long-term persistence and maintain the genetic diversity of the individual populations of westslope cutthroat trout in the Dillon Field Office. Ensure the long-term self-sustaining persistence of fluvial and adfluvial arctic grayling in the Dillon Field Office.**

See **Desired Future Condition** under **Fish**.

### **Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Participate in the implementation of the MOU and the Conservation Agreement for WCT in Montana.
- Participate in the implementation of the Restoration Plan for fluvial arctic grayling.
- Initiate and perform long-term fisheries habitat and water quality surveys to document and monitor trends in fishery habitat.
- Encourage maintenance work on diversion structures to reduce WCT loss in irrigation ditches.
- Initiate habitat restoration on special status species fishery streams that are Functioning At Risk (FAR) or Nonfunctional (NF).
- Develop a cooperative agreement with FWP for adequate protection and access to the fluvial arctic grayling brood pond within the Axolotl Lakes area.
- Coordinate with FWP to manage beaver where site-specific assessments have identified concerns with beaver presence or absence in relation to sensitive fish species habitat.
- See Fisheries section for discussion of fisheries habitat by alternative and the Westslope Cutthroat Trout section of **Appendix D**.

	<p>1. Manage habitat containing sensitive fish values in a manner that will achieve the <i>Western Montana Standards for Rangeland Health</i>.</p> <p>2. No related action</p> <p>3. No related action.</p> <p>4. No related action.</p> <p>5. See ACEC section for discussion on WCT values in WCT Habitat (99% and above purity) potential ACEC.</p>	<p>1. Manage habitat containing sensitive fish values to achieve potential or an upward trend within 15 years.</p> <p>2. Require bonding and full restoration of disturbed habitat in WCT streams with 90% and above pure populations where surface disturbing mineral exploration or development occurs within 100 feet of the centerline of any stream.</p> <p>3. Pursue water leasing in coordination with FWP for WCT streams.</p> <p>4. No related action.</p> <p>5. Same as A.</p>	<p>1. Manage habitat containing sensitive fish values to achieve potential or an upward trend within 10 years.</p> <p>2. Withdraw WCT streams with 90% and above pure populations from mineral entry.</p> <p>3. Pursue water leasing in coordination with FWP for WCT and grayling streams.</p> <p>4. Coordinate with FWP on reintroduction of fluvial grayling in Big Hole headwaters streams (i.e. Yank Swamp, Big Lake Creek).</p> <p>5. Same as A</p>	<p>1. Manage habitat containing sensitive fish values to achieve potential or an upward trend within 15 years.</p> <p>2. No related action.</p> <p>3. No related action.</p> <p>4. No related action</p> <p>5. Same as A.</p>
--	--	--	---	---



## Special Status Species—Plants

**Goal 1—Identify, conserve, and monitor rare, vulnerable, and representative habitats, plant communities, and ecosystems to ensure that there is a self-sustaining persistence of special status plants within the DFO.**

**Goal 2—Ensure that proposed land uses initiated or authorized by BLM avoid inadvertent damage to habitats supporting special status plants and plant communities.**

**Goal 3—Promote public awareness, appreciation and understanding of rare plants and their habitats.**

### Management Common to All Alternatives:

- Assist in maintaining Montana's web-based rare plant field guide.
- Educate weed crews to recognize and avoid special status plants and habitats.
- Consider the potential for adverse effects on special status plants during project level planning and recommend mitigation measures to protect them during preparation of site-specific environmental documents.
- Continue and consider additional inventory, monitoring, and research studies on special status plants and associated plant communities.

	<p>1. Use existing inventories to determine presence/absence of BLM special status plant populations.</p> <p>2. Consider mitigation measures to protect BLM special status plants on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>3. Manage habitat containing BLM special status plants to be consistent with achieving the Western Montana Standards for Rangeland Health.</p>	<p>1. Conduct field inspections to identify special status plant species prior to authorizing surface disturbing activities. Waivers for on-the-ground inventory would be granted in areas determined to have low potential based on existing information.</p> <p>2. Do not authorize activities that disturb mineral soil (blading, plowing, ripping, chaining, etc.) within populations of BLM special status plants.</p> <p>3. Adjust management to protect or enhance BLM special status plants when the <i>Western Montana Standards for Rangeland Health</i> are not being met or when monitoring shows BLM special status plants are being impacted.</p>	<p>1. Same as B.</p> <p>2. Minimize or eliminate activities that disturb mineral soil (blading, plowing, ripping, chaining, etc.) within 1/4 mile of populations of BLM special status plants.</p> <p>3. Defer grazing or provide yearlong rest two years out of three on habitats supporting populations of BLM special status plant species susceptible to herbivory. Genera currently on the BLM special status plant list that are susceptible to herbivory include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Astragalus</li> <li>• Carex</li> <li>• Elymus</li> <li>• Penstemon</li> <li>• Taraxacum</li> <li>• Thalictrum</li> </ul>	<p>1. Same as B.</p> <p>2. Same as B.</p> <p>3. Same as A.</p>
--	--	---	--	--

	<p>4. Consider applications for changes in season of use of grazing allotments on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>5. Consider applications for grazing use on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>6. No related action.</p>	<p>4. Maintain winter grazing use on BLM lands in the following allotments to benefit BLM special status plant species:  —Frenchie Allotment #10121  —Timber Butte Allotment #20168  —Cold Spring Allotment #20215  —Spring Creek Pasture of Stonehouse Allotment #30005</p> <p>5. Issue no term grazing permit or lease in the Eli Spring area (S1/2 Sec. 3, N1/2 Sec. 10, T9S, R11W). Temporary non-renewable grazing could be authorized to meet BLM special status plant needs.</p> <p>6. Develop habitat management plans and conservation strategies for BLM special status plant species/habitats, with priority placed on the following species:  For riparian habitats:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carex idaho</li> <li>• Taraxacum eriophorum</li> <li>• Thalictrum alpinum</li> </ul> For sagebrush-steppe habitats:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Penstemon lemhiensis</li> <li>• Astragalus scaphoides</li> <li>• Astragalus terminalis</li> <li>• Sphaeromeria argentea</li> </ul> </p>	<p>4. Same as B.</p> <p>5. Same as B, but also reroute the road around the spring to avoid BLM special status plant habitat, and to maintain Eli Spring in a natural, undeveloped state.</p> <p>6. Develop habitat management plans for the following areas:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upper Big Sheep Creek Watershed</li> <li>• North Tendoy Mtns</li> <li>• Sage Creek Watershed</li> <li>• Centennial Valley</li> <li>• Bannack Bench/Badger Pass/Rocky Hills</li> </ul> </p>	<p>4. Same as A.</p> <p>5. Same as A.</p> <p>6. No related action.</p>
--	---	--	---	--

## ***Vegetation—Forests and Woodlands***

**Goal – Manage forests and woodlands to sustain their vitality and diversity.**

**Desired Future Condition for Forests and Woodlands (after 20-50 years of management):**

- Curl leaf mountain mahogany occupy historic range and are in stable or improving condition.
- Douglas-fir/sagebrush interface represents an open savannah aspect. Rocky Mountain juniper and limber pine are restricted to historic sites where wildland fire frequency is limited by lower site productivity and sparse fuels. Both species occur in low densities in association with vigorous shrubs, grasses, and forbs (where site potential permits).
- Douglas-fir forests contain healthy stands of site-appropriate species. Stands are relatively open, with tree density within site capacity. Low intensity fires can be accommodated without excessive loss of trees, and insect and disease occurrence is at endemic levels.
- Lodgepole pine and spruce/fir forests are represented by a diversity of age classes and structure.
- White bark pine forests occupy historic range and are in stable or improving condition.
- Quaking aspen groves occupy historic range and are in stable or improving condition. Aspen stands contain multi-aged stems and adequate regeneration to perpetuate the stand. Age classes are mostly less than 100 years old with good understory diversity.

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Continue collaborative vegetation planning on a multi-agency ownership basis.
- Coordinate all proposed vegetation treatment projects with FWP.
- Conduct no mechanical treatment on slopes of 70% or greater.
- Aspen restoration treatments of 100 acres or less will be excluded from livestock grazing until aspen regeneration is a minimum of 5 feet tall on average.
- Consider treatment of insect infestations with sanitation cutting or other methods on a case-by-case basis.
- Provide wood products as a result of vegetation treatments on a case-by-case basis where appropriate
- Consider salvage harvest on a case-by-case basis.

	1. Conduct forest vegetation inventory utilizing the Forest Vegetation Information System (FORVIS).	1. Same as A, but with target completion date of 2020.	1. Same as B.	1. Same as B.
--	---	--	---------------	---------------

<p>2. Emphasize treatment of vegetation that has missed two or more fire cycles.</p> <p>Treat lands in the Pioneer and Gravelly landscapes to provide for forest health as identified in respective landscape analyses. Treat approximately 6,700 acres of Warm and Dry habitat and 1,300 acres of Cool and Moist Habitat and 500 acres of Aspen Restoration.</p> <p>Treat up to 3,000 acres outside of the Pioneer and Gravelly landscapes using conventional treatments.</p> <p>3. Implement aspen restoration treatments on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>4. Allow no mechanical treatment in WSAs until released from further wilderness consideration.</p>	<p>2. Focus on the following geographic areas for treatment of forest and woodlands first:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>southern Rubys</li> <li>south Tobacco Roots</li> <li>Barton/Idaho Gulch</li> </ul> <p>Treat up to 4,000 acres in Cool/Moist habitat type groups with commercial thinning, group/individual tree selection, or clearcut with reserve treatments within these geographic areas.</p> <p>Treat up to 10,000 acres in Warm and Very Dry and/or Warm and Dry habitat types using commercial thinning or group/ individual tree selection treatments.</p> <p>Once treatments in focus areas are implemented continue treatment in the Warm and Very Dry and/or Warm and Dry habitat types up to an additional 9,000 acres using commercial thinning, group or individual tree selection treatments, with priority in urban interface areas.</p> <p>3. Implement up to 12,000 acres of aspen restoration treatments in priority areas primarily located in southern portions of the DFO.</p> <p>4. Allow mechanical treatments in conjunction with prescribed fire in WSAs where wilderness values will be enhanced.</p>	<p>2. Treat up to 7,000 acres across the planning area in Warm and Very Dry and/or Warm and Dry habitat types using commercial thinning, group, or individual tree selection treatments.</p> <p>Do not treat forest and woodlands in Cool Moist habitat types.</p> <p>3. Implement up to 12,000 acres of aspen restoration treatments in priority areas primarily located in southern portions of the DFO. De-emphasize follow-up mechanical treatments, but treat with prescribed fire.</p> <p>4 Same as A.</p>	<p>2. Place priority for treatment in urban interface areas first.</p> <p>Treat up to 15,000 acres of Warm and Very Dry and/or Warm and Dry habitat types across the planning area using commercial thinning or group/individual tree selection treatments.</p> <p>Treat up to 22,000 acres of Warm and Moist and/or Cool and Moist habitat type groups across the planning area using commercial thinning, group or individual tree selection, and/or clearcut with reserves treatments.</p> <p>3. Implement up to 14,000 acres of aspen restoration treatments across the planning area using a variety of tools. Follow-up with a variety of methods including mechanical, fire and other appropriate tools.</p> <p>4. Same as B.</p>
--	--	--	--

***Vegetation—Invasive and Non-native species, including Noxious Weeds***

**Goal – Prevent the introduction and spread of invasive and noxious plants.**

**Desired Future Condition**

- New infestations of noxious weeds are not common across the landscape, and existing large infestations are declining.

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Manage Montana State designated noxious weeds according to the principles of integrated pest management, Partners Against Weeds An Action Plan for the Bureau of Land Management, (BLM 1996b), the Montana Weed Management Plan, (Duncan 2001) and the Montana Noxious Weed Act.
- Continue cooperative agreements with Beaverhead and Madison counties for noxious weed control.
- Encourage the development of Cooperative Weed Management Areas where all the landowners are cooperatively working to contain or eradicate noxious weeds within designated areas. Treatment methods include chemical, cultural, mechanical, and biological.
- Evaluate invasive species such as downy brome (cheat grass) in site-specific projects associated with the watershed analysis.
- Reestablish perennial vegetation using native species in rehabilitation and reclamation unless site specific evaluations indicate that nonnative species are needed to ensure success or rapid vegetative reestablishment.

	1. Prohibit aerial application of herbicides and pesticides on a case-by-case basis.	1. Same as A, but emphasize protection of special status plants and associated plant communities in the Centennial Sandhills and Big Sheep Creek Basin, occupied pygmy rabbit habitat, sage grouse breeding habitat, and mountain mahogany habitats.	1. Prohibit aerial application of herbicides and pesticides in the following locations: —within 1/4 mile of special status plants and associated plant communities —within occupied pygmy rabbit habitat identified at the project level —within sage grouse breeding habitat —within mountain mahogany habitats	1. Same as A.
--	--	--	--	---------------

## Vegetation–Rangelands

**Goal – Manage the vegetative resource to maintain a diversity of ecological conditions on upland vegetation.**

**Desired Future Condition for Rangelands (after 20-50 years of management):**

- Sagebrush steppe includes a mosaic of multiple-aged shrubs, forbs, and native perennial grasses. Shrub overstories are present in a variety of spatial arrangements and scales across the landscape, including disjunct islands and corridors.
- A full range of sagebrush communities with diverse species and sub-species, canopy, density, and age classes are present across the landscape.
- Grass and forb plant communities occur within site potential and are stable or improving in health and vigor.
- Populations and habitats of rare plant species and their associated communities are stable or continue to improve in vigor and distribution.
- Upland vegetation provides sufficient plant cover and litter accumulation to protect soils from wind and water erosion, and enhances nutrient cycling and productivity.

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Actions on BLM lands are consistent with achieving the *Western Montana Standards for Rangeland Health*.
- Complete assessments for rangeland health on a priority watershed basis.
- Strategies that best protect rangeland resources during periods of drought would be implemented with an emphasis on voluntary adjustments in livestock use to achieve long-term resource productivity.

	<p>1-7. Consider vegetation treatments in rangeland habitats on a case-by-case basis.</p>	<p>1. Treat or harvest conifer encroachment in all non-forested habitat types on a case-by-case basis using prescribed and natural fire, mechanical treatment, or other tools as appropriate.</p> <p>Focus treatments in areas of urban interface and in the following geographic areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• southern Rubys</li> <li>• south Tobacco Roots</li> <li>• Barton/Idaho Gulch</li> </ul> <p>2. Treat xeric shrub on a case-by case basis using all available tools for a fire return interval of approximately 50 years.</p>	<p>1. Treat or harvest conifer encroachment in all non-forested habitat types located within aspen restoration areas or urban interface using prescribed fire, mechanical treatment, or other tools as appropriate.</p> <p>Treat conifer encroachment in non-forested habitat types located outside of aspen restoration areas or urban interface using prescribed natural fire only.</p> <p>2. Treat xeric shrub using only natural fire for a fire return interval of approximately 50 years.</p>	<p>1. Treat or harvest conifer encroachment in all non-forested habitat types on a case-by-case basis using prescribed and natural fire, mechanical treatment, or other tools as appropriate.</p> <p>2. Consider treatment on a case-by-case basis using all tools available to manage xeric shrub habitat types in areas that exceed a canopy density of 25% for a fire return interval of approximately 50 years</p>
--	---	--	---	--

	<p>3. Treat mountain shrub on a case-by case basis using all available tools for a fire return interval of approximately 20 to 40 years.</p> <p>4. Treat fire-sprouted mountain shrub on a case-by case basis using all available tools for a fire return interval of approximately 20 years.</p> <p>5. Consider treatment of mesic shrub habitat types (which occur in limited amounts within the planning area) on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>6. Consider treatment of mountain mahogany habitat types (which occur in limited amounts within the planning area) on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>7. Seedlings will meet site-specific objectives. Focus restoration on areas containing high resource values using all tools available.</p>	<p>3. Treat mountain shrub using only natural fire for a fire return interval of approximately 20 to 40 years.</p> <p>4. Treat fire-sprouted mountain shrub using only natural fire for a fire return interval of approximately 20 years.</p> <p>5. Same as B.</p> <p>6. Restore mountain mahogany as the dominant vegetation type where Douglas-fir canopy is &gt;15% and has overtopped mountain mahogany stands. Focus areas include but are not limited to: —Barton Gulch/ Idaho Creek —Canyon Creek/Big Hole —Big Sheep Creek —Hells Canyon</p> <p>7. Restore seedlings to native communities where site potential allows and a diversity of native vegetation is not being recruited. Restoration of priority habitats and species would be accomplished by using all available tools.</p>	<p>3. Treat up to 30,000 acres of mountain shrub habitat types using prescribed and natural fire and other tools. This habitat would be managed for a fire return interval of 20 to 40 years.</p> <p>4. Treat up to 7,000 acres of fire sprouted mountain shrub habitat types using prescribed and natural fire and other tools. This habitat would be managed for a fire return interval of 20 years.</p> <p>5. Same as B.</p> <p>6. Same as B.</p> <p>7. Take no proactive measures to restore seedlings to native habitats.</p>
--	---	--	--

<b><i>Vegetation–Riparian and Wetlands</i></b>																								
<p><b>Goal –Restore and maintain riparian wetland areas so that at least 914 miles of streams and 2,050 acres of wetlands are in proper functioning condition. The actual number of miles of stream and acres of wetlands will be adjusted as inventories are completed throughout the planning area.</b></p> <p><b>Desired Future Condition for Riparian and Wetlands (after 20-50 years of management):</b>            Manage for proper functioning conditions on all riparian and wetland habitats.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Riparian and wetland vegetation supports proper functioning condition of biologic, hydrologic, and physical components of streams and wetlands.</li> <li>Deciduous woody and coniferous communities are present with diverse composition, density, and age structure within site potential.</li> <li>Herbaceous plant communities are dominated by deep-rooted native species that support streambank and shoreline stability, floodplain development, and nutrient cycling.</li> <li>Stream channels display the dimensions, pattern and profile that are representative of site potential (Rosgen).</li> <li>Emphasize a tall deciduous shrub or aspen/cottonwood dominance on ~570 miles of stream with the remainder in herbaceous and coniferous habitat types (~385 miles).</li> </ul> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Conifer types (juniper, spruce, DF)</td><td>Existing 45%</td><td>440 miles</td><td>Desired 25%</td><td>240 miles</td></tr> <tr> <td>Aspen/cottonwood types</td><td>15%</td><td>133 miles</td><td>20%</td><td>190 miles</td></tr> <tr> <td>Tall shrub types (willow, dogwood, birch)</td><td>30%</td><td>280 miles</td><td>40%</td><td>380 miles</td></tr> <tr> <td>Herbaceous, misc. types</td><td>10%</td><td>102 miles</td><td>15%</td><td>145 miles</td></tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aquatic vegetation supports populations of well-distributed native and desired non-native vertebrate and invertebrate species.</li> </ul> <p><b>Management Common To All Alternatives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actions on BLM lands would be consistent with achieving the <i>Western Montana Standards for Rangeland</i>.</li> <li>Use the <i>Western Montana Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management</i> and the <i>Best Management Practices for Grazing, Montana</i> (DNRC 1999) to develop site-specific objectives and management strategies for riparian and wetland areas during the development and implementation of proposed actions and plans.</li> <li>Conserve riparian/wetland habitat by intensifying cooperative efforts among state, private and federal interests and minimize the destruction, loss or degradation of wetlands.</li> <li>Maintain current exclosures free from livestock grazing, ensure routine maintenance is completed annually on all exclosures before livestock turnout, and monitor to compare differences between areas grazed and ungrazed by livestock.</li> <li>Coordinate all proposed vegetation treatment projects with FWP.</li> <li>Coordinate with FWP to manage beaver where site-specific assessments have identified concerns with beaver presence or absence in relation to riparian habitat conditions.</li> </ul>					Conifer types (juniper, spruce, DF)	Existing 45%	440 miles	Desired 25%	240 miles	Aspen/cottonwood types	15%	133 miles	20%	190 miles	Tall shrub types (willow, dogwood, birch)	30%	280 miles	40%	380 miles	Herbaceous, misc. types	10%	102 miles	15%	145 miles
Conifer types (juniper, spruce, DF)	Existing 45%	440 miles	Desired 25%	240 miles																				
Aspen/cottonwood types	15%	133 miles	20%	190 miles																				
Tall shrub types (willow, dogwood, birch)	30%	280 miles	40%	380 miles																				
Herbaceous, misc. types	10%	102 miles	15%	145 miles																				
	1. Manage for PFC on all riparian and wetland habitats. Increase PFC from 18%. Decrease FAR from 59% and decrease NF from 23%.	1. Manage to achieve DFC or strong upward trend in 20 years. Increase PFC from 18% to 50%. Decrease FAR from 59% to 30% and NF from 23% to 20%.	1. Manage to achieve DFC or strong upward trend in 10 years. Increase PFC from 18% to 60%. Decrease FAR from 59% to 20% and NF from 23% to 20%.	1. Manage to achieve a strong upward trend within the 20 years life of plan, projected DFC would not be achieved in 20 years, but could be achieved in 50 years. Increase PFC from 18% to 80%. Decrease FAR from 59% to 20% and NF from 23% to 0%.																				



<p>2. No related action.</p> <p>3. No related action.</p>	<p>2. Restore ~100 miles of conifer riparian habitat types with deciduous woody canopy of &gt;15% back to aspen/cottonwood or tall shrub habitat types, using the classes described in the narrative.</p> <p>3. No related action.</p>	<p>2. Same as B</p> <p>3. Manage aspen/Kentucky bluegrass habitat types as a priority for treatment in both upland and riparian settings to restore a diversity of aspen age classes and structure, and native herbaceous vegetation. Treatments should be large scale and widespread to avoid concentrated use by wild ungulates. Aspen restoration treatments of 100 acres or less will be excluded from grazing until aspen regeneration is a minimum of 5 feet tall on average. ( See <i>Livestock Grazing and Forests and Woodlands Vegetation</i> sections for additional aspen treatment information).</p>	<p>2. Apply riparian restoration projects to aspen communities only. Otherwise, succession would be allowed to proceed to coniferous types within site potential in riparian communities.</p> <p>3. No related action.</p>
---	--	---	--

**Visual Resources**

**Goal – Manage scenic values in accordance with the objectives established for Visual Resource Management (VRM) classes.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Manage visual resources according to established guidelines for VRM classes as described in Chapter 3. Use the visual resource contrast rating system during project level planning to determine whether or not proposed activities will meet VRM objectives. Identify mitigation measures to reduce visual contrasts. Prepare rehabilitation plans to address landscape modifications on a case-by-case basis.

1. Manage 129,163 acres as VRM Class I.	1. Manage 128,269 acres as VRM Class I.	1. Manage 128,269 acres as VRM Class I.	1. Manage 128,269 acres as VRM Class I.
2. Manage 34,392 acres as VRM Class II.	2. Manage 30,810 acres as VRM Class II.	2. Manage 42,370 acres as VRM Class II.	2. Manage 30,397 acres as VRM Class II.
3. Manage 218,442 acres as VRM Class III.	3. Manage 723,585 acres as VRM Class III.	3. Manage 711,969 acres as VRM Class III.	3. Manage 697,669 acres as VRM Class III.
4. Manage 519,045 acres as VRM Class IV.	4. Manage 18,412 acres as VRM Class IV.	4. Manage 18,412 acres as VRM Class IV.	4. Manage 44,752 acres as VRM Class IV.
5. See <i>ACEC</i> section for discussion on scenic values in the Centennial Mountains and Muddy Creek/Big Sheep Creek potential ACECs.	5. Same as A.	5. Same as A.	5. Same as A.

## Water

**Goal – Restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of waters within BLM lands to protect beneficial uses.**

**Desired Future Condition (after 20 years of management)**

- All water sources provide water quality and quantity sufficient to meet Montana State standards and to protect or restore beneficial uses.
- Stream channels display the dimensions, pattern and profile that are representative of site potential to allow floodplain aquifer recharge, moderate stream flows and buffer the effects of flooding.

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Actions on BLM lands would be consistent with achieving the *Western Montana Standards for Rangeland Health*.
- Use the State of Montana Best Management Practices to address non point source water pollution.
- Comply with the non-degradation provisions of the Montana Water Quality Act.
- Work cooperatively with the State of Montana and local watershed groups in the development and implementation of Water Quality Restoration Plans.
- Implement the provisions of BLM-MOU-MT923-0214 between the BLM and the MT DEQ. Coordinate with MT DEQ and communities, as requested, to develop Source Water Protection Plans. Review projects on a case-by-case basis to mitigate impacts to water quality.
- Maintain water rights and instream flow reservations subject to Montana water law. Participate in the Montana Statewide water adjudication process. Comply with Montana law for water rights.
- Implement watershed rehabilitation measures as soon as possible after major catastrophic natural or human-caused fire or flood events.
- Obtain all necessary permits pertaining to water quality, wetlands and streams.

***Wild Horses and Burros***

**Goal – Promote the wild horse and burro adoption program.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- There are no wild horse or burro herds within the planning area.
- Conduct public education and compliance inspections as required for adopters in the planning area.

## RESOURCE USES

<i>No Action (Alternative A)</i>		<i>Alternative B</i>	<i>Alternative C</i>	<i>Alternative D</i>
<p><b>Forest Products</b></p> <p><b>Goal —Provide opportunities for traditional and non-traditional uses by incorporating sound ecological principles while contributing to the economic stability of the community.</b></p> <p><b>Management Common to All Alternatives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with appropriate entities pertaining to forest vitality and diversity, and/or other administrative concerns.</li> <li>• Conduct inventory of remaining forest lands that have not been inventoried.</li> <li>• Analyze the salvage of forest products resulting from wildfire, prescribed fire, forest insect/disease, or weather induced events.</li> <li>• Conduct salvage in a manner commensurate with forest health guidance and in consideration of other resource values. Consider removal of suitable biomass (non-commercial size products) on a case-by-case basis.</li> <li>• Provide the opportunity for both traditional and non-traditional use of forests and woodlands.</li> <li>• Stewardship opportunities would be considered on a case-by-case basis.</li> <li>• Management actions would not change more than 15% of lynx habitat within an LAU to an unsuitable condition within a 10-year period. Additional programmatic-specific conservation measures are found in the Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy in the Lynx section of <b>Appendix D</b>.</li> </ul>				
	<p>1. Conduct harvest treatment on up to 3,000 acres over the life of the plan on lands outside of the Pioneer and Gravelly landscape analysis with an average of 1.6 million board feet (MMBF) in annual timber production.</p> <p>Conduct harvest on lands within the Gravelly and Pioneer Landscape Analysis as described in the opportunity section of the plans. This could provide from 0.2 to 0.8 (MMBF) annually.</p> <p>Allow no timber harvest activities in the areas depicted on <b>Map 9</b>.</p>	<p>1. Manage 35,000 (23,000 acres without aspen) as available for harvest, with an associated annual Probable Sale Quantity (PSQ) of 6.6 MMBF (3.6 MMBF without aspen), allowing harvest in all habitat types in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• southern Ruby Mountains</li> <li>• south Tobacco Root Mountains</li> <li>• Barton/Alder Gulch.</li> </ul> <p>Allow additional harvest across the planning area in Warm and Dry, Warm and Very Dry, and Cool and Moist habitat type groups.</p>	<p>1. Manage 19,000 acres (7,000 without aspen) as available for harvest, with an associated annual PSQ of 3.7 MMBF (0.7 MMBF without aspen) in Warm and Dry and Warm and Very Dry habitat type groups.</p>	<p>1. Manage 51,000 acres (37,000 without aspen) as available for harvest, with an associated annual PSQ of 9.6 MMBF ( 5.9 MMBF without aspen) allowing harvest across the planning area in Warm and Dry, Warm and Very Dry, and Cool and Moist habitat type groups.</p>

	<p>2. Evaluate thinning in lodgepole pine and/or Douglas-fir types for potential impacts to lynx habitat.</p> <p>3. Replant all disturbed sites after disturbance to reflect historic stocking rates. Monitor/resolve effects of grazing pressure on regeneration sites.</p> <p>4. Consider salvage harvest on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>5. Provide opportunities for small sale of forest products to the general public on a case-by-case basis.</p>	<p>2. Conduct commercial thinning in up to 14% of moist forest habitat types.</p> <p>3. Same as A.</p> <p>4. Consider salvage harvest in insect ridden, diseased, and burned stands, with an emphasis on spruce budworm infestations.</p> <p>5. Provide opportunities for small sale of forest products within same areas available for commercial harvest.</p>	<p>2. Prohibit commercial thinning in moist forest habitat types.</p> <p>3. Replant commercial sites only where necessary to mitigate negative resource effects from disturbances. Protect plantations from livestock pressure until established if necessary.</p> <p>4. Same as B.</p> <p>5. Provide opportunities for small sale of forest products where appropriate, focusing on areas of wildland-urban interface.</p>	<p>2. Conduct commercial thinning in up to 79% of moist forest habitat types.</p> <p>3. Replant all commercial sites after disturbance to reflect historic stocking rates if adequate natural regeneration is lacking. Protect plantations from livestock pressure until established if necessary.</p> <p>4. Same as A.</p> <p>5. Same as A.</p>
--	---	---	---	--

***Lands and Realty*****Goal 1– Meet public needs for use authorizations such as right-of-way, leases, and permits while minimizing adverse impacts to other resource values****Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Analyze requests for land use authorizations and apply mitigation measures on a case-by-case basis.
- Do not issue land use authorizations for uses which would involve the disposal or storage of materials which could contaminate the land (hazardous waste disposal sites, landfills, etc.)
- Locate new right-of-way facilities within or adjacent to existing rights-of-way to the extent practical.
- Group new communication site users into suitable existing sites to reduce impacts and expedite application processing.
- Complete a site plan prior to authorizing communication site uses in new areas.
- Consider the use of alternative energy sources where electric power is not available.
- Allow owners of non-Federal land surrounded by public land managed under FLPMA a degree of access across public land which will provide for the reasonable use and enjoyment of the non-Federal land.
- Do not require right-of-way, leases, permits, or easements for casual use activities. Recognize pre-FLPMA rights-of-way constructed on public lands even though the authorities authorizing these uses have been repealed (i.e., 1866 ditches and canals, RS 2477 roads, etc.).
- When feasible, require distribution lines to be buried on public lands when within + mile of each side of the Madison River to preserve scenic quality.
- Abate realty-related unauthorized use through prevention, detection, and resolution.
- Upon settlement of trespass liability, resolve unauthorized use of public lands by termination, authorization, or sale or exchange, as appropriate.
- Interim management policy and guidelines for land use authorizations in WSAs would be followed as appropriate.
- Reclaim sites affected by unauthorized use as determined necessary.
- Implement the “Suggested Practices for Raptor Protection on Power Lines” (APLIC 1996) and “USFWS Interim Guidance to Avoid and Minimize Wildlife Impacts from Wind Turbines” (USFWS 2003)

1.Designate no right-of-way use areas for communication sites.

1. Designate five (5) right-of-way use areas for communication sites (Armstead Mountain, Maurer Mountain, Pipe Organ, Bear Trap and Virginia City Hill). Encourage applicants for communication site facilities to locate within these use areas. Site plans would be developed for each of the above listed designated communication sites use areas and updated periodically as necessary.

1. Same as B.

1. Same as B.

	<p>2. Designate no right-of-way corridors across the planning area.</p> <p>3. Designate no right-or-way exclusion areas.</p> <p>4. Designate no avoidance areas for right-of-ways.</p> <p>5. No related action.</p>	<p>2. Designate two right-of-way corridors across the planning area as delineated in the 1992 Western Regional Corridor Study. Nominal corridor width would be 1,320 feet (1/4 mile) on each side of centerline of existing facilities, except where the alignment forms the boundary of a Special Management Area, where the width would be 2,640 feet (1/2 mile) on the side opposite that boundary. Encourage location of all electrical transmission lines 69 kV and greater and pipelines 10 inches and greater within designated corridors.</p> <p>3. Designate the Bear Trap Wilderness (6,347 acres) as an exclusion area.</p> <p>4. Designate the following areas as avoidance areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 WSAs</li> <li>• Lewis &amp; Clark Trail</li> </ul> <p>A total of 123,286 acres.</p> <p>5. No related action.</p>	<p>2. Same as B.</p> <p>3. Designate the following areas as exclusion areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bear Trap Wilderness</li> <li>• Beaverhead Rock</li> </ul> <p>A total of 6,467 acres.</p> <p>4. Designate the following areas as avoidance areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 WSAs</li> <li>• Lewis &amp; Clark Trail</li> <li>• Blue Lake</li> <li>• Centennial Mountain</li> <li>• Everson Creek</li> <li>• Virginia City Historic District</li> </ul> <p>A total of 145,657 acres.</p> <p>5. No related action</p>	<p>2. Same as B.</p> <p>3. Same as B.</p> <p>4. Designate the following areas as avoidance areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 WSAs</li> </ul> <p>A total of 122,851 acres.</p> <p>5. Process FLPMA ROW reservations on all developed recreation sites not currently withdrawn from mineral entry.</p>
--	---	--	--	--



**Goal 2—Retain public lands with high resource values in public ownership. Adjust land ownership to consolidate public land holdings, acquire lands with high public resource values, and meet public and community needs.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Public access would be maintained or improved through all land ownership adjustment transactions.
- Newly acquired lands would be managed for the highest potential purpose for which they are acquired.
- Limit direct purchase of lands to cases where no practical alternatives exist and high public values would be acquired.
- Lands acquired within special management areas with specific Congressional mandates (such as National Trails and Wilderness Areas) would be managed in conformance with established guidelines for those areas.
- Lands acquired within administratively designated special management areas such as ACEC's and SRMA's which have unique or fragile resources would be managed the same as the special management area.
- Lands acquired without special values or management goals would be managed in the same manner as comparable surrounding public lands.
- Lands and interests in lands obtained with LWCF appropriations would not be available for disposal by any means.

	<p>1. Consider land ownership adjustments on a case-by-case basis based primarily on criteria and the two zones established in the 1984 Land Pattern Review and Land Adjustment Supplement to the 1983 State Director Guidance and using exchange as the preferred means of land acquisition and disposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage 811,000 acres as a “retention zone” generally for retention but allowing for some for disposal actions.</li> <li>• Manage 91,000 acres as “lands outside retention” as available for the full array of land adjustment opportunities.</li> </ul> <p>2. Consider applications for R&amp;PP transfers and airport grants on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>3. Make lands available for state grants, agricultural entries, and Indian allotments on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>4. Acquire tracts identified in Dillon MFP to protect and enhance a variety of resource values see <b>Appendix F</b>.</p>	<p>1. Establish three (3) adjustment categories.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage 142,000 acres in Category 1 for retention and allow no disposal.</li> <li>• Manage 756,000 acres in Category 2 for retention but allow limited adjustment.</li> <li>• Manage 4,000 acres in Category 3 as available for potential disposal.</li> </ul> <p>2. Consider applications for R&amp;PP transfers and airport grants in Categories 2 and 3 on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>3. No lands administered by the DFO would be available for state grants, agricultural entries, or Indian allotments.</p> <p>4. Consider acquiring, from willing parties, lands that meet the acquisition criteria in <b>Appendix F</b>.</p>	<p>1. Establish two (2) adjustment categories.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage 142,000 acres in Category 1 for retention and allow no disposal.</li> <li>• Manage 760,000 acres in Category 2 for retention but allow limited adjustment.</li> </ul> <p>2. Consider R&amp;PP transfers and airport grants of public land in Category 2 on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>3. Same as B.</p> <p>4. Same as B.</p>	<p>1. Same as B.</p> <p>2. Same as B.</p> <p>3. Same as B.</p> <p>4. Same as B.</p>
--	---	---	---	---

**Goal 3 – Acquire and maintain access to public lands where needed to improve management efficiency and facilitate multiple use and the public’s enjoyment of these lands in coordination with other federal agencies, state and local governments, and private landowners.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Use all methods available to acquire access from willing parties.
- In conveyance documents associated with land ownership adjustments, maintain existing access to public lands using covenant language.

	1. Acquire legal public or administrative access from willing landowners on a case-by-case basis as the need or opportunity arises using criteria and direction contained in the State Director Guidance on Access (USDI-BLM 1989). Focus easement acquisition in areas with completed route analyses.	1. Acquire legal public or administrative access from willing landowners on a case-by-case basis as the need or opportunity arises. Focus acquisition of access by various means on routes designated as open in the travel plan that lack legal public access, and in areas classified as Category 1 and 2 for retention.	1. Same as B.	1. Same as B.
--	--	--	---------------	---------------

**Goal 4 – Utilize withdrawal actions with the least restrictive measures and minimum size necessary to accomplish the required purposes.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Review existing withdrawals on a case-by-case basis prior to the end of the withdrawal period or as otherwise required by law to determine whether the withdrawals should be extended, revoked, or modified.
- Withdrawals no longer needed, in whole or in part, for the purpose for which they were withdrawn would be revoked or modified.
- Consider other agency requests for withdrawal relinquishments, extensions or modifications on a case-by-case basis.
- New withdrawal proposals where the public land would transfer from one federal agency to another or where resource values or agency investments are best protected by withdrawal would be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Lands proposed to be withdrawn should be the minimum area required for the intended use and where applicable alternative prescriptions such as the use of rights-of-way, leases, permits, or cooperative agreements are inadequate to protect the resource values.
- Terminate the current classification on five acres of public land at Road Agent’s Rock.
- Review existing classifications on a case-by-case basis to determine if they should be continued or terminated.

**Livestock Grazing**

**Goal – Manage the public rangelands to provide for a sustainable level of livestock grazing consistent with multiple use and sustained yield.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Actions consistent with achieving the *Western Montana Standards for Rangeland Health* would be incorporated in livestock grazing permits.
- Implement the “Revised Guidelines for Management of Domestic Sheep and Goats In Native Wild Sheep Habitats” to protect bighorn sheep habitat.
- Continue implementation of existing Allotment Management Plans (AMPs), including the associated range improvement projects and develop and implement new AMPs to direct site-specific management of livestock as evaluated through the priority watershed assessment process for rangeland health.
- Incorporate strategies from *Best Management Practices for Grazing, Montana* (DNRC 1999) where applicable.
- Conduct use supervision within staffing capabilities.
- Continue management of jointly managed FS-BLM allotments under the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest and Butte District BLM MOU for cooperative management.
- During drought conditions, normal grazing schedules and livestock management practices may need to be modified

	<p>1. Make 854,757 acres available for managed livestock grazing. Maintain 46,469 acres as unavailable for livestock grazing.</p> <p>2. Allocate 113,219 AUMs on 425 allotments. Use monitoring to adjust allocations by allotment in order to meet the Standards for Rangeland Health. Impose reductions in graduated steps. Allocate increases after interdisciplinary review.</p> <p>3. No term grazing permits or leases would be authorized in unalloted areas.</p>	<p>1. Make 852,778 acres available for managed livestock grazing. Approximately 48,448 acres would not be available for livestock grazing.</p> <p>2. Same as A, except potential reductions in AUMs ranging from 0-11% (101,183 AUMs), or other changes in operations would occur with full implementation of the plan.</p> <p>3. No term grazing permits or leases would be authorized in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unalloted areas</li> <li>• Blue Lake</li> <li>• Eli Springs</li> </ul>	<p>1. Make 835,115 acres available for livestock grazing. Approximately 66,111 acres would not be available for livestock grazing.</p> <p>2. Same as A, except potential reductions in AUMs ranging from 0-50% (56,637 AUMs), or other changes in operations, and closure of some allotments would occur.</p> <p>3. No term grazing permits or leases would be authorized in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unalloted areas</li> <li>• Blue Lake</li> <li>• Eli Springs</li> <li>• currently unleased allotments</li> <li>• Axolotl acquisition</li> <li>• Riverside Allotment</li> <li>• wetlands/waterfowl production areas in the Centennial Valley</li> </ul>	<p>1. Same as B.</p> <p>2. Same as A.</p> <p>3. Same as B.</p>
--	--	---	--	--

<p>4. Applications for grazing use of unleased allotments, acquired lands, and relinquished or cancelled allotments would be considered on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>5. Maintain the Cross and Exchange Allotments as Resource Reserve Allotments.</p> <p>6. Consider livestock utilization of key forage species on a case-by-case basis during Allotment Management Plan development or revision.</p> <p>7. Adjust grazing as part of the allotment management planning process to protect or enhance BLM sensitive plants when livestock grazing is a contributing factor to not meeting <i>Western Montana Standards for Rangeland Health</i>.</p> <p>8. Adjust grazing as part of the allotment management planning process to protect or enhance fish habitat when livestock grazing is a contributing factor to not meeting <i>Western Montana Standards for Rangeland Health</i>.</p>	<p>4. Currently unleased lands, acquired lands, and relinquished or cancelled allotments would be evaluated to determine if they would be designated as Resource Reserve Allotments, reallocated, or classified as unavailable for livestock grazing. Priority would be given to designating Resource Reserve Allotments where the need exists.</p> <p>5. Same as A.</p> <p>6. Establish allowable use levels for grazing allotments during the watershed assessment process.</p> <p>7. Adjust grazing as part of the allotment management planning process to protect or enhance BLM sensitive plants when <i>Western Montana Standards for Rangeland Health</i> are not being met or when monitoring shows BLM sensitive plants are being impacted.</p> <p>8. Same as A. Adjust grazing or implement projects to protect concentrated spawning areas in 99% and above WCT streams.</p>	<p>4. Same as B, except acquired lands would not be reallocated.</p> <p>5. Same as A.</p> <p>6. Same as A.</p> <p>7. Defer grazing or provide yearlong rest two years out of three on habitats supporting populations of BLM sensitive plant species susceptible to herbivory. Genera currently on the BLM sensitive plant list that are susceptible to herbivory include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Astragalus</li> <li>• Carex</li> <li>• Elymus</li> <li>• Penstemon</li> <li>• Taraxacum</li> <li>• Thalictrum</li> </ul> <p>8. Same as A. Adjust grazing or implement projects to protect WCT spawning and fry emergence between April 15 and August 15.</p>	<p>4. Same as B.</p> <p>5. Same as A.</p> <p>6. Allow upland utilization of key forage species up to an average of 35% across all allotments. Elk winter ranges would have 30% rest on a rotational basis.</p> <p>7. Same as A.</p> <p>8. Same as A.</p>
--	--	--	--

	<p>9. Treatment areas will be rested from livestock grazing up to one year prior to treatment if necessary to maintain fuels for burning and for a minimum of two growing seasons following treatment actions to promote recovery of vegetation. Livestock rest for less than two growing seasons may be justified on a case-by-case basis based on sound resource data and experience.</p> <p>10. No related action.</p> <p>11. Implement the Red Rock HMP.</p> <p>12. No related action.</p> <p>13. No related action.</p>	<p>9. Same as A.</p> <p>10. Small and isolated aspen restoration treatments will have management design to reduce or eliminate browsing impacts until aspen regeneration is a minimum of five feet tall on average.</p> <p>11. Provide a minimum 12-inch residual tall emergent wetland vegetation on all wetland and waterfowl production areas in the Centennial Valley.</p> <p>12. Maintain cattle as primary class of livestock on mountain mahogany habitat. Sheep grazing on mountain mahogany habitats will be mitigated through specific grazing treatments, or where necessary, eliminated.</p> <p>13. No related action.</p>	<p>9. Treatment areas will be rested from livestock grazing up to one year prior to treatment if necessary to maintain fuels for burning and for two years post treatment, followed by no growing season livestock grazing for the next three years. No increase in livestock stocking rates would result from vegetation treatments.</p> <p>10. Same as B.</p> <p>11. See #3 in this section above.</p> <p>12. Maintain cattle as the only class of livestock on all mountain mahogany habitat types unless those areas can be retired and closed to grazing.</p> <p>13. Authorize no new, transferred, or converted domestic sheep permits in the following areas that contain suitable grizzly bear and wolf habitat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centennial Mountains</li> <li>• Snowcrest Mountains</li> <li>• Gravelly Range</li> <li>• Greenhorn Mountains</li> <li>• Axolotl Lakes</li> <li>• along the Continental Divide from Monida to Lemhi Pass</li> </ul>	<p>9. Same as A.</p> <p>10. Same as B.</p> <p>11. Same as A.</p> <p>12. Same as B.</p> <p>13. No related action.</p>
--	--	--	--	--

<i>Minerals - Leasable</i>				
<b>Goal 1 – Advance dependable, affordable, and environmentally responsible production and distribution of leasable minerals by identifying lands appropriate for lease and development.</b>				
<b>Management Common to All Alternatives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow interim management policy and guidelines for mineral leasing in WSAs as appropriate.</li> <li>All public lands available for oil and gas leasing will be offered first by competitive bid at an oral auction.</li> <li>Appropriate stipulations, terms, and conditions will be applied at the time of leasing.</li> </ul>				
<i>Oil and Gas</i>	1. Manage 426,335 acres as open to leasing, subject to standard lease terms.  2. Manage 580,750 acres as open to leasing, subject to minor constraints.  3. Manage 218,210 acres as open to leasing subject to major constraints.	1. Manage 281,829 acres as open to leasing, subject to standard lease terms.  2. Manage 575,223 acres as open to leasing, subject to minor constraints.  3. Manage 352,228 acres as open to leasing subject to major constraints.	1. Manage 127,687 acres as open to leasing, subject to standard lease terms.  2. Manage 19,614 acres as open to leasing, subject to minor constraints.  3. Manage 120,840 acres as open to leasing subject to major constraints. 3. Manage 115,648 acres as open to leasing subject to major constraints.	1. Manage 272,168 acres as open to leasing, subject to standard lease terms.  2. Manage 822,971 acres as open to leasing, subject to minor constraints.

	<p>4. Manage 129,316 acres as closed to leasing in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 WSAs</li> <li>• Bear Trap Wilderness</li> </ul>	<p>4. Manage 145,554 acres as closed to leasing in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 WSAs</li> <li>• Bear Trap Wilderness</li> <li>• National Historic Landmarks</li> <li>• Lands administered by ARS</li> </ul>	<p>4. Manage 1,086,596 acres as closed to leasing in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 WSAs</li> <li>• Bear Trap Wilderness</li> <li>• State Game Ranges</li> <li>• Lands administered by ARS</li> <li>• sage grouse winter/spring</li> <li>• 1/2 mi of sage grouse leks</li> <li>• Big Game winter range</li> <li>• Big Game birthing areas</li> <li>• Bighorn sheep range and core areas</li> <li>• 1 mile of bald eagle nests</li> <li>• 1/2 mile of raptor breeding</li> <li>• 1/2 mile of waterfowl production</li> <li>• wetland projects</li> <li>• 1 mile of peregrine breeding</li> <li>• 1/2 mile of ferruginous hawk nesting</li> <li>• westslope cutthroat trout habitat 90-100% pure</li> <li>• eligible cultural properties/ districts</li> <li>• traditional cultural properties</li> <li>• known paleontological sites</li> <li>• 1 mile of National Historic Trails</li> <li>• Continental Divide Scenic Trail</li> <li>• suitable WSRs</li> </ul>	<p>4. Manage 143,857 acres as closed to leasing in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 WSAs</li> <li>• Bear Trap Wilderness</li> <li>• Lands administered by</li> <li>• ARS</li> </ul>
<i>Coal and Oil Shale</i>	<p>1. Consider proposals for coal or oil shale leasing on a case-by-case basis for all federal mineral estate within the planning area.</p>	<p>1. Same as A.</p>	<p>1. Same as A.</p>	<p>1. Same as A.</p>

<i>Phosphate and other solids</i>	<p>1. Manage an estimated 1,229,705 acres of federal mineral estate as open for solid mineral leasing.</p> <p>2. Manage an estimated 125,129 acres as closed to leasing.</p> <p>3. Monitor reclamation of the phosphate mine in the Centennial Mountains.</p>	<p>1. Manage an estimated 1,230,599 acres of federal mineral estate as open for solid mineral leasing.</p> <p>2. Manage an estimated 124,235 acres as closed to leasing.</p> <p>3. Same as A.</p>	<p>1. Same as B.</p> <p>2. Same as B.</p> <p>3. Same as A.</p>	<p>1. Same as B.</p> <p>2. Same as B.</p> <p>3. Same as A.</p>
<i>Geothermal</i>	<p>1. Lands in the planning area would be available for geothermal leasing, unless located within wilderness or WSAs or instances where it is determined that issuing the lease would cause unnecessary or undue degradation to public lands or resources.</p>	<p>1. Same as A.</p>	<p>1. Same as A.</p>	<p>1. Same as A.</p>

**Goal 2 – Allow environmentally responsible geophysical exploration for energy resources in the Dillon FO on lands administered by the BLM.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Review Notices of Intent and develop mitigation measures so as not to create undue and unnecessary degradation.

	<p>1. Restrict vehicular oil and gas geophysical exploration on 65,544 acres in the following areas as shown on <b>Map 31</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East Fork of Blacktail Deer Creek</li> <li>• Centennial Mountains</li> <li>• Upper Clark Canyon</li> <li>• Axolotl Lakes Area</li> <li>• Madison River</li> <li>• Big Hole River</li> <li>• on unstable and highly erodible soils</li> <li>• on paleontological sites</li> </ul> <p>2. Evaluate oil and gas geophysical exploration in the remainder of the DFO on a case-by-case basis.</p>	<p>1. Apply travel limitations as described on Maps 44 and 45 to oil and gas geophysical exploration and consider exceptions as described in <b>Appendix I</b> on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>2. Use oil and gas lease stipulations as starting point to develop mitigation measures for each NOI. Consider geophysical exploration in areas closed to leasing or with NSO and/or timing restrictions based on the nature of impacts identified in site-specific analysis.</p>	<p>1. Apply travel limitations as described on <b>Maps 47 and 48 (oversized)</b> to oil and gas geophysical exploration and consider exceptions as described in <b>Appendix I</b> on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>2. Same as B.</p>	<p>1. Apply travel limitations as described on <b>Maps 49 and 50 (oversized)</b> to oil and gas geophysical exploration and consider exceptions as described in <b>Appendix I</b> on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>2. Same as B.</p>
--	--	---	---	---



Minerals - Locatable

Goal – Encourage and facilitate development of locatable minerals in the manner to prevent undue and unnecessary degradation.

Management Common to All Alternatives:

- Coordinate with Montana Department of Environmental Quality during the review and approval of mining operations.
- Within constraints of the mining law, apply terms and conditions to all areas open to locatable mineral entry to meet the *Western Montana Standards for Rangeland Health*.
- Analyze all recommendations regarding disposal or withdrawal of lands on a case-by-case basis for mineral potential (ie. mineral character) of each tract before any decision is finalized.
- Comply with all state and federal laws. Continue administration of locatable minerals as required by law and regulation (43 CFR 3809)
  - Review and process notices to ensure the proposed action does not create unnecessary or undue degradation of the environment.
  - Review and process plans of operation to ensure the proposed action does not create unnecessary or undue degradation of the environment.
  - Conduct at a minimum annual compliance inspections on each active notice and plan of operation.
  - Allow casual use where work is done by hand and no explosives are used. Refer inquiries to appropriate agencies for further guidance on other permit requirements.

	1. Manage approximately 30,000 acres of federal mineral estate currently withdrawn as closed to locatable mineral entry.	1. Same as A.	1. Same as A.	1. Same as A.
--	--	---------------	---------------	---------------

<p>2. Withdraw approximately 12,700 acres from locatable mineral entry in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Axolotl Lakes acquisition (400 acres)</li> <li>• Road Agent Rock (10 acres)</li> <li>• Squirrel Rock (10 acres)</li> <li>• Wedding Ring Rock (10 acres)</li> <li>• Public lands in the Centennial Mountains east of Matsingale Creek (12,270 acres)</li> </ul> <p>3. Maintain federal mineral interests underlying R&amp;PP, FLPMA exchange, FLPMA sales, and Small Tract Act conveyances as unavailable for mineral entry.</p>	<p>2. Withdraw approximately 2,705 acres from locatable mineral entry in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Axolotl Lakes acquisition (400 acres)</li> <li>• Christnot Mill (20 acres)</li> <li>• Developed Recreation Sites (797 acres)</li> <li>• Lewis's Lookout (160 acres)</li> <li>• Land along Madison River between Warm Springs and planning boundary (1,609 acres)</li> <li>• Road Agent Rock (10 acres)</li> <li>• Squirrel Rock (10 acres)</li> <li>• Wedding Ring Rock (10 acres)</li> </ul> <p>**acres will not match total due to overlap</p> <p>3. Manage federal mineral estate underlying R&amp;PP conveyances as unavailable for mineral entry. Manage the remainder of split federal mineral estate as open to locatable mineral entry, subject to the provisions of 43 CFR 3814.</p>	<p>2. Withdraw approximately 25,963 acres from locatable mineral entry in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Axolotl Lakes acquisition and watershed, including Blue Lake (1,517 acres)</li> <li>• Beaverhead Rock (120 acres)</li> <li>• Christnot Mill (20 acres)</li> <li>• Developed Recreation Sites (797 acres)</li> <li>• Everson Creek area (2160 acres)</li> <li>• Lewis's Lookout (480 acres)</li> <li>• Land along Madison River between Cliff Lake and planning boundary (4,661 acres)</li> <li>• Muddy Creek area (15,240 acres)</li> <li>• Road Agent Rock (10 acres)</li> <li>• Squirrel Rock (10 acres)</li> <li>• Virginia City (340 acres)</li> <li>• Wedding Ring Rock (10 acres)</li> <li>• Westslope cutthroat trout streams 90% and above (3,078 acres)</li> </ul> <p>**acres will not match total due to overlap</p> <p>3. Same as B.</p>	<p>2. Withdraw approximately 470 acres from locatable mineral entry in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Axolotl Lakes acquisition (400 acres)</li> <li>• Lewis's Lookout (40 acres)</li> <li>• Road Agent Rock (10 acres)</li> <li>• Squirrel Rock (10 acres)</li> <li>• Wedding Ring Rock (10 acres)</li> </ul> <p>3. Same as B.</p>
---	--	---	--

## Mineral Materials

**Goal –Provide for the extraction of mineral materials to meet public demand, while minimizing adverse impacts to other resource values.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Maintain currently authorized mineral material sites unless circumstances dictate they should be closed.

	<p>1. Manage 129,204 acres as closed to mineral material disposal in the following areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bear Trap Wilderness</li> <li>• all WSAs</li> </ul> <p>2. Manage 772,022 acres of BLM-administered lands as open for mineral materials disposal.</p> <p>Consider new locations outside of closed areas on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Apply terms and conditions to protect resource values on a case-by-case basis.</p>	<p>1. Manage 136,214 acres as closed to mineral material disposal in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bear Trap Wilderness</li> <li>• Centennial Sandhills</li> <li>• Christnot Mill</li> <li>• Developed recreation sites</li> <li>• Lands within + mile either side of Big Sheep Creek Road, except in sections 26 and 35 in T14S, R10W and section 2 in T15S, R10W</li> <li>• Lewis's Lookout</li> <li>• all WSAs (except Tobacco Root Tack-Ons)</li> </ul> <p>2. Manage 765,012 acres of BLM-administered land as open to mineral material disposal.</p> <p>Consider new locations outside of closed areas on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Apply terms, conditions, or other special considerations needed to protect resources in open areas, as identified in <b>Appendix H.</b></p>	<p>1. Manage entire planning area as closed to mineral material disposal except for currently authorized sites.</p> <p>2. Manage currently authorized sites (681 acres of BLM-administered land) as open to mineral material disposal.</p> <p>Establish no new mineral material sites during the life of the plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bear Trap Wilderness</li> <li>• all WSAs (except Tobacco Root Tack-Ons)</li> </ul>	<p>1. Manage 128,285 acres as closed to mineral material disposal in the following areas:</p> <p>2. Manage 772,941 acres as open to mineral material disposal and actively identify available mineral material locations for future use.</p> <p>Apply terms, conditions, or other special considerations needed to protect resources in open areas, as identified in <b>Appendix H.</b></p>
--	--	---	--	---

**Recreation**

**Goal 1—Provide a diverse array of quality, resource based recreation opportunities while protecting and interpreting the resource values, providing educational opportunities, minimizing user conflicts, and promoting public safety.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- BLM-administered land in the planning area would be managed for a variety of recreation opportunities (i.e., hunting, fishing, sightseeing, off-highway vehicle use, horseback riding, mountain biking, hiking, rafting, rockhounding, etc.) consistent with other resource management objectives.
- Implement the Lower Madison River Recreation Area Management Plan (USDI-BLM 2003a) and the Missouri-Madison Comprehensive Recreation Plan (Dames & Moore 1996, revised PPL Montana, LLC 2001) to manage lands in the lower Madison River corridor.
- Complete the evaluation and update of the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness Management Plan (USDI-BLM 1984a) and begin implementation.
- Provide appropriate protection of significant cave resources identified in the planning area in accordance with the Federal Cave Resource Protection Act of 1988.

	<p>1. Manage public lands in the Big Hole River corridor by implementing the <i>Lower Big Hole River Recreation Area Management Plan</i> (USDI-BLM 1987b).</p> <p>2. Manage Axolotl Lakes acquisition lands under interim management as described in BLM EA #MT-050-2001-13 for the Axolotl Lakes land exchange.</p> <p>3. Maintain and/or improve the quality and quantity of sport fishing opportunities on public lands.</p>	<p>1. Develop additional recreational support facilities at Maiden Rock Boat Launch site in addition to implementing the <i>Lower Big Hole River Recreation Area Management Plan</i> (USDI-BLM 1987b).</p> <p>2. Prepare and implement a management plan in cooperation with FWP for Axolotl Lakes acquisition lands consistent with other provisions in this respective alternative.</p> <p>3. Establish use levels for BLM launch sites in coordination with FWP to manage for quality opportunities.</p>	<p>1. Same as A</p> <p>2. Same as B.</p> <p>3. Same as B.</p>	<p>1. Same as B.</p> <p>2. Same as B.</p> <p>3. Same as A</p>
--	---	---	---	---

	<p>4. Maintain eight (8) currently designated SRMAs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Axolotl Lakes</li> <li>• Bear Trap/Red Mtn</li> <li>• Big Sheep Creek</li> <li>• Centennial Mtns.</li> <li>• East Fork Blacktail</li> <li>• Upper Madison River</li> <li>• Lower Big Hole River</li> <li>• Ruby Reservoir</li> </ul> <p>A total of 87,600 acres.</p>	<p>4. Maintain six (6) SRMAs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Axolotl Lakes</li> <li>• Bear Trap/Ennis Lake/Lower Madison</li> <li>• Big Sheep Creek</li> <li>• Centennial Mtns.</li> <li>• East Fork Blacktail</li> <li>• Upper Madison River</li> </ul> <p>Drop two (2) SRMAs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower Big Hole River</li> <li>• Ruby Reservoir</li> </ul> <p>Designate three (3) new SRMAs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Pioneers</li> <li>• Rocky Hills (if released)</li> <li>• Ruby Mountains</li> </ul> <p>A total of 123,549 acres.</p>	<p>4. Maintain seven (7) SRMAs</p> <p>Axolotl Lakes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bear Trap/Ennis Lake/Lower Madison</li> <li>• Big Sheep Creek</li> <li>• Centennial Mtns.</li> <li>• East Fork Blacktail</li> <li>• Upper Madison River</li> <li>• Lower Big Hole River</li> </ul> <p>Drop one (1) SRMA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ruby Reservoir</li> </ul> <p>A total of 74,700 acres.</p>	<p>4. Maintain seven (7) SRMAs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Axolotl Lakes</li> <li>• Bear Trap/Ennis Lake/Lower Madison</li> <li>• Big Sheep Creek</li> <li>• Centennial Mtns.</li> <li>• East Fork Blacktail</li> <li>• Upper Madison River</li> <li>• Lower Big Hole River</li> </ul> <p>Drop one (1) SRMA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ruby Reservoir</li> </ul> <p>Designate three (3) new SRMAs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Pioneers</li> <li>• Rocky Hills (if released)</li> <li>• Ruby Mountains</li> </ul> <p>A total of 128,114 acres.</p>
--	---	--	--	---

**Goal 2—Develop and maintain appropriate recreation facilities, balancing public demand, protection of Public Land resources, and fiscal responsibility.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- All existing recreation facilities would be maintained and managed, some in partnership with other agencies or groups.
- Emphasis would be placed on providing interpretive and informational signs and materials for public lands visitors, maintaining existing facilities to a high standard consistent with the recreational setting, and limiting development of additional facilities to those areas where public recreational use of surrounding public lands requires the
- Consider rental of existing cabins/facilities on public land for public recreational use on a case-by-case basis.
- Non-motorized recreational trails would be constructed and/or maintained as funding and staffing allow. Priority for this work would include the East Fork Blacktail Deer Creek area and the Ruby Mountains.

**Goal 3—Issue special recreation permits in an equitable manner for specific recreational uses of the public lands and related waters as a means to minimize user conflicts, control visitor use, to protect recreation resources, and to provide for private and commercial recreation use.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Manage special recreation permits in accordance with established terms and conditions.

	<p>1. Accept no applications for special recreation permits that require additional analysis.</p> <p>2. No related action.</p>	<p>1. Evaluate applications for recreational related activities other than outfitted big game hunting on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>2. Manage outfitted big game hunting permits based on Outfitter Permit Areas (OPAs) and maintain current levels of permitted outfitter use (visitor use days):            Blacktail Mountains/Sage Creek: 150            Centennial Mountains and Valley: 490            E. Pioneers/Highland Mountains: 90            Horse Prairie/Tendoys/Big Sheep Creek: 550            Madison River: 140            Ruby Mountain/Sweetwater: 60            Tobacco Root Mountains: 20</p>	<p>1. Same as B.</p> <p>2. Manage outfitted big game hunting permits based on Outfitter Permit Areas (OPAs) and decrease current levels of permitted outfitter use by 15%.            Blacktail Mountains/Sage Creek: 127            Centennial Mountains and Valley: 416            E. Pioneers/Highland Mountains: 76            Horse Prairie/Tendoys/Big Sheep Creek: 467            Madison River: 119            Ruby Mountain/Sweetwater: 51            Tobacco Root Mountains: 17</p>	<p>1. Same as B.</p> <p>2. Manage outfitted big game hunting permits based on Outfitter Permit Areas (OPAs) and increase the total # of permitted outfitters use days in 3 OPAs.            Blacktail Mountains/Sage Creek: 295            Centennial Mountains and Valley: 490            E. Pioneers/Highland Mountains: 150            Horse Prairie/Tendoys/Big Sheep Creek: 550            Madison River: 140            Ruby Mountain/Sweetwater: 100            Tobacco Root Mountains: 20</p>
--	--	---	---	---

**Goal 4—Develop and maintain cooperative relationships with National, State, and local recreation providers, tourism entities, and local recreational groups.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Maintain cooperation with a variety of user groups, especially in the local area, to provide diverse recreational opportunities for enjoyment of public lands. Promote and support recreation-based tourism.
- Complete development and maintenance of sites identified in the 2002 FERC re-licensing agreement for the Missouri-Madison hydroelectric project

Renewable Energy

Goal 1—Provide opportunities for the development of renewable energy resources from sources such as wind, biomass, solar, and low-impact hydropower while minimizing adverse impacts to other resource values.

Management Common to All Alternatives:

- Proposals for renewable energy development would be analyzed on a case-by-case basis.
- Although no areas would be specifically designated for renewable energy development, opportunities for such development would be provided to the extent consistent with other goals, objectives, and requirements of the plan.

	1. For renewable energy projects requiring rights-of-way, no lands would be managed as designated right-of-way avoidance and exclusion areas, nor would any areas be designated as right-of-way corridors or communication site use areas.	1. For renewable energy projects requiring rights-of-way, take into account designated right-of-way avoidance and exclusion areas as well as designated right-of-way corridors and use areas.	1. Same as Alternative B.	1. Same as Alternative B.
--	--	---	---------------------------	---------------------------

March 2004

## ***Transportation and Facilities***

**Goal —Manage facilities, including roads and trails, to provide for public access or administrative needs, while maintaining or protecting resource values, in coordination with other federal agencies, state and local governments, and private landowners.**

### **Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Inventory system roads and other facilities and maintain to BLM standards within assigned maintenance levels and to meet public health and safety requirements.
- Maintain non-system roads on a case-by-case basis.
- Analyze new road or facility construction on a case-by case basis.
- Construct new temporary roads to minimum standards necessary.
- Close and rehabilitate non-essential roads where problems exist, if the expenditure of funds is justified.



## *Travel Management and OHV Use*

**Goal – In coordination with other federal agencies, state and local governments, and private landowners, manage motorized travel to provide recreational experiences while maintaining or protecting resource values.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Across all alternatives BLM will promote the use of shared trails whenever possible.
- Travel in the Centennial Mountains would be managed in accordance with the Centennial Mountain Travel Management Plan approved in February 2001.
- Development or construction of motorized and/or mountain bike routes are acknowledged within this plan as a future need and will be considered in area-specific planning.
- Opportunities for motorized travel have been identified in the south end of the Pioneer Mountains to create loop routes to connect public and Forest Service roads.

1. Designate 0 acres as open, 854,250 acres as limited, and 46,976 acres as closed to OHV use.	1. Same as A.	1. Same as A.	1. Same as A.
2. Designate 2,102 miles of road across BLM as open to OHV use.	2. Designate 1,276 miles of road across BLM as open to OHV use.	2. Designate 1,116 miles of road across BLM as open to OHV use.	2. Designate 1,465 miles of road across BLM as open to OHV use.
3. Designate 822,844 acres as open to snowmobile use and 78,402 acres as closed to snowmobile use.	3. Same as A.	3. Designate 757,699 acres as open to snowmobile use and 143,547 acres as closed to snowmobile use. Additional closures include Ruby Mtns WSA, Henneberry WSA, Bell-Limekiln WSA, Farlin Creek WSA, Axolotl WSA and a portion of the Blacktail Mountains WSA.	3. Same as A.
4. Allow for exceptions to designated route travel as identified in <b>Appendix I</b> .	4. Same as A.	4. Same as A.	4. Same as A, except also allow for motorized use of restricted roads (no cross-country travel) for game retrieval between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. during big game hunting season.

***Utility and Communication Corridors***

**Goal – Encourage the use of designated right-of-way corridors and use areas to the extent practical in order to minimize adverse environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate rights-of-way.**

See **Lands and Realty** section.

**FIRE MANAGEMENT AND ECOLOGY****Wildland Fire**

**Goal —Provide the appropriate management response on all wildland fires with an emphasis on firefighter and public safety. When assigning priorities, base decisions on relative values to be protected commensurate with fire management costs.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- The Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest and the DNRC will implement fire preparedness, prevention, and suppression on BLM land through the interagency offset and six party fire protection agreement.
- Implement an aerial detection plan in cooperation with other fire management agencies.
- Restrict equipment use in wilderness and wilderness study areas in accordance with minimum impact suppression tactics. Follow the interim management policy and guidelines for lands under wilderness review (H-8550-1).
- Manage naturally ignited wildand fires in the Bear Trap Unit of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness Area under the prescription guidelines established in the Bear Trap Unit of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness Area Fire Management Plan.
- Fire management activities would be prioritized by their risk to life and property across the planning area. Fires that are adjacent or near wildland urban interface would have the highest priority for fire suppression.
- Refer to **Appendix J** for Fire Management Zone and Category descriptions.

	<p>1. Determine the appropriate management response based on the following area designations of Control Areas, Confinement Area A and Confinement Area B:</p> <p>Manage the approximately 40% of the planning area as Control Areas. Take immediate action with sufficient forces to suppress a fire within the first burning period.</p> <p>Manage approximately 60% of the planning area as Confinement Areas.</p> <p>In Confinement Areas A use natural and/or preconstructed barriers or environmental conditions to confine a fire and manage for desired results before implementing full suppression, with no acreage limitations.</p> <p>In Confinement Area B use natural and/or preconstructed barriers or environmental conditions to confine a fire and manage for desired results until acreage limitations are reached, then take suppression action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 acres in Fuel Type H (lighter stocked conifers):</li> <li>• 250 acres in Fuel Type L (perennial grasses)</li> <li>• 10 acres in Fuel Type G (dense conifers)</li> <li>• 250 acres in Fuel Type T (sage/ grass)</li> </ul>	<p>1. Take appropriate management response on all man-caused and natural fire in accordance with Fire Management Categories A through D.</p> <p>Designate approximately 37,573 acres as Fire Management Category A.</p> <p>Designate approximately 72,867 acres as Fire Management Category B.</p> <p>Designate approximately 776,925 acres as Fire Management Category C.</p> <p>Designate approximately 13,665 acres as Fire Management Category D.</p>	<p>1. Take appropriate management response on all man-caused and natural fire in accordance with the Fire Management Categories A through D.</p> <p>Designate approximately 37,573 acres as Fire Management Category A.</p> <p>Designate approximately 26,728 acres as Fire Management Category B.</p> <p>Designate approximately 70, 296 acres as Fire Management Category C.</p> <p>Designate approximately 766,433 acres as Fire Management Category D.</p> <p>Focus wildfire suppression efforts on large Class 3 or 4 stands of sagebrush that are isolated from other dense stands</p>	<p>1. Take appropriate management response on all man-caused and natural fire in accordance with the Fire Management Categories A through D.</p> <p>Designate approximately 93,152 as Fire Management Category A.</p> <p>Designate approximately 581,383 acres as Fire Management Category B.</p> <p>Designate approximately 226,669 acres as Fire Management Category C.</p> <p>Manage 0 acres under Fire Management Category D.</p>
--	---	---	--	---

## Prescribed Fire

**Goal —Restore and maintain desired ecological conditions and fuel loadings through use of prescribed fire, wildland fire, and other treatment methods.**

### Management Common to All Alternatives:

- Restrict equipment use in wilderness and wilderness study areas in accordance with minimum impact suppression tactics. Follow the interim management policy and guidelines for lands under wilderness review (H-8550-1).
- Place priority on fuels reduction in wildland urban interface areas.
- Prioritize treatments based on comparing historical fire regimes and current fire severity.
- Maintain fire dependent ecosystems and restore those outside their natural balance through mechanical, chemical, and prescribed fire treatments.
- Coordinate all vegetation treatment projects with FWP and adjacent landowners.

	<p>1. Implement prescribed fire following timber harvest on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>2. Implement treatment of aspen with prescribed fire on a case-by-case basis</p> <p>3. Implement prescribed burn treatment of conifer encroachment in non-forest vegetation on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>4. Implement prescribed burn treatments of sagebrush steppe on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>5. Allow wildland fire from natural ignitions to burn for resource benefits within Category D areas.</p> <p>6. No related action.</p>	<p>1-4. See <b>Resources, Vegetation</b> sections for <i>Forests and Woodlands</i>, and <i>Rangeland</i> for the number of acres to be treated.</p> <p>5. Allow wildland fire from natural ignitions to burn for resource benefits within Confinement Area A and Confinement Area B until acreage limitations are met.</p> <p>6. Use prescribed burning to treat warm/dry forested habitat types and conifer encroachment within wilderness study areas to enhance wilderness values and mimic natural fire regime and restore the role of fire to the WSAs.</p>	<p>1-4. Same as B.</p> <p>5. Same as B.</p> <p>6. No related action.</p>	<p>1-4. Same as B.</p> <p>5. No related action.</p> <p>6. Same as B.</p>
--	--	--	--	--

<b>Rehabilitation</b>				
<b>Goal 1 – Use rehabilitation to mitigate the adverse effects of fire on the soil, vegetation, and water resources in a cost effective manner.</b>				
	1.Implement emergency fire rehabilita- tion activities on a case-by-case basis.	1.Implement emergency fire rehabilitation activities as specified in <b>Appendix J.</b>	1. Same as B.	1. Same as B.

## SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS

### *Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)*

**Goal —Protect relevant and important values through ACEC designation and apply special management where standard or routine management is not adequate to protect the values from risks or threats of damage/degradation or to provide for public safety from natural hazards.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:** None.

	<p>1. Designate no ACECs. Conduct a case-by-case review of proposed actions in the following 13 areas that meet the relevance and importance criteria to protect human life and safety or significant resources from degradation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beaverhead Rock</li> <li>• Big Sheep Creek</li> <li>• Block Mountain</li> <li>• Blue Lake</li> <li>• Centennial Mountains</li> <li>• Centennial Sandhills</li> <li>• Centennial Valley Wetlands</li> <li>• Everson Creek</li> <li>• Ferruginous Hawk Nesting Area</li> <li>• Lewis &amp; Clark Trail</li> <li>• Muddy Creek/Big Sheep Creek</li> <li>• Virginia City Historic District</li> <li>• Westslope Cutthroat Trout Habitats with greater than 99% purity</li> </ul>	<p>1. Designate 8 areas totaling 82,743 acres as ACECs in need of special management, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beaverhead Rock</li> <li>• Block Mountain</li> <li>• Blue Lake</li> <li>• Centennial Mountains</li> <li>• Centennial Sandhills</li> <li>• Everson Creek</li> <li>• Muddy Creek/Big Sheep Creek</li> <li>• Virginia City Historic District</li> </ul>	<p>1. Designate 2 areas totaling 9,701 acres as ACECs in need of special management, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Block Mountain</li> <li>• Centennial Sandhills</li> </ul>	<p>1. Designate 13 areas totaling 225,524 acres as ACECs in need of special management, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beaverhead Rock</li> <li>• Big Sheep Creek</li> <li>• Block Mountain</li> <li>• Blue Lake</li> <li>• Centennial Mountains</li> <li>• Centennial Sandhills</li> <li>• Centennial Valley Wetlands</li> <li>• Everson Creek</li> <li>• Ferruginous Hawk Nesting Area</li> <li>• Lewis &amp; Clark Trail</li> <li>• Muddy Creek/Big Sheep Creek</li> <li>• Virginia City Historic District</li> <li>• Westslope Cutthroat Trout Habitats with greater than 99% purity</li> </ul>
--	---	--	--	--

### ***Back Country Byways***

**Goal —Highlight and interpret scenic, historic, archaeological, or other interest values associated with Back Country Byways in partnership with communities, interest groups, and state and federal agencies.**

	1. Continue designation of the Big Sheep Creek National Back Country Byway (approximately 50 miles). Implement the plan developed for the Byway, with additional emphasis placed on coordinating with local residents in that area to develop information and interpretive materials for visitors to the byway that highlight multiple uses of public lands and land stewardship in the area.	1. Same as A.	1. Undesignate the Big Sheep Creek Back Country Byway.	1. Same as A.
--	---	---------------	--	---------------

### ***National Recreation Areas***

None within the planning area.

### ***National Trails***

**Goal – Assist in cooperative efforts to manage current and future national trails to protect the values for which they were designated.**

#### **Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- The BLM managed portions of the Congressionally-designated Continental Divide National Scenic Trail would be completed through the Centennial Mountains, and signed and maintained to allow the public to enjoy the trail while maintaining the surrounding natural beauty of the corridor and the opportunity for a relatively primitive recreation opportunity. The CDNST, and its tributary trails located on BLM lands and identified for maintenance in the Centennial Mountains Travel Management Plan (USDI-BLM 2001a) would receive highest priority in the DFO planning area for maintenance and/or reconstruction as described in that plan.
- The Bear Trap Canyon National Recreation Trail would also receive the same level of maintenance and management priority as the CDNST, and would be similarly maintained to preserve the surrounding scenic values and opportunities for primitive recreation opportunities within the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness.
- National Historic Trails located on public lands in the planning area, including portions of the Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) and Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail would be managed to protect and enhance their historic values. Opportunities for interpretation would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

<i>Lewis and Clark Trail</i>	1. Manage 4.4 miles of the 16 miles of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and associated viewshed in the Horse Prairie area under VRM Class III.	1. Same as A.	1. Manage 4.4 miles of the 16 miles of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and associated viewshed in the Horse Prairie area under VRM Class II.	1. Same as A.
------------------------------	---	---------------	--	---------------

***Wild and Scenic Rivers***

**Goal – Identify river segments suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:** None.

	<p>1. Manage the eight (8) eligible river segments to protect the free-flow, outstandingly remarkable values, and tentative classification. Do not complete suitability review. Conduct a case-by-case review of proposed actions in eligible rivers or river segments and apply protective management, subject to valid existing rights.</p> <p>Eligible rivers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bear Creek</li> <li>• Beaverhead River</li> <li>• Big Hole River (2 segments)</li> <li>• Big Sheep Creek</li> <li>• Madison River (3 segments)</li> </ul>	<p>1. Recommend none of the eight (8) eligible river segments as suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.</p>	<p>1. Recommend all of the eight (8) eligible river segments as suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Systems.</p>	<p>1. Same as B.</p>
--	--	--	--	----------------------

***Wilderness***

**Goal –Manage designated wilderness areas for the preservation of natural conditions and processes, and to provide opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Manage the Bear Trap Unit of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness as designated wilderness according to direction provided by the BLM Manual H-8560-1, *Management of Designated Wilderness Areas*. Implement the *Wilderness Management Plan for Bear Trap Canyon Unit of Lee Metcalf Wilderness* (USDI-BLM 1984a) and the *Limits of Acceptable Change Management Direction, Bear Trap Canyon Unit* (USDI-BLM 1991c).



*Wilderness Study Areas*

**Goal – Manage wilderness study areas (WSAs) so as not to impair their suitability for preservation as wilderness until such time as Congress either designates them as wilderness or releases them from further study.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- The Farlin Creek WSA studied under Section 202 of FLPMA as well as all WSAs studied under Section 603 of FLPMA would continue to be managed according to the Interim Management Policy to meet the non-impairment standard until such time as Congress either designates them as wilderness or releases them from further consideration as wilderness. Those areas designated wilderness by Congress will be managed according to a wilderness management plan written specifically for that area. Those areas released from further consideration as wilderness would be managed consistent with prescriptions identified in the release provisions specified in **Appendix M**.

	1. Manage the Tobacco Root Tack-on WSA, studied under Section 202 of FLPMA, under interim management.	1. Release the Tobacco Root Tack-on WSA, studied under Section 202 of FLPMA, from interim management and manage lands as provided for in this land use plan.	1. Same as B.	1. Same as B.
--	---	--	---------------	---------------

## SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

### *Economics*

**Goal – Provide for a diverse array of stable economic opportunities in an environmentally sound manner.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Assess impacts of project proposals on a case-by-case basis.

### *Environmental Justice*

**Goal – Identify and remediate to the extent possible disproportionate negative effects to minority or low income populations per Executive Order 12898—“Federal Action to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations”.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:** Assess impacts of project proposals on a case-by-case basis.

### *Health and Safety–Abandoned Mine Lands*

**Goal – Protect humans and the environment from exposure to abandoned mine lands while considering associated resource values such as historic resources.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Take appropriate action on historic mine sites that present serious threats to the environment and pose safety risks to the public. Prioritize reclamation based on the inventory of sites and the degree of threat to human health, the environment, and public safety. Conduct reclamation in accordance with the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan.

### *Health and Safety–Debris Flows*

There are no current concerns with debris flows in the planning area.

### *Health and Safety–Hazardous Materials*

**Goal –Protect humans and the environment from exposure to hazardous materials.**

**Management Common to All Alternatives:**

- Comply with all appropriate laws and regulations regarding hazardous materials. Do not permit unauthorized storage, treatment, or disposal of hazardous waste on public lands. Respond to hazardous materials incidents and sites using standard operating procedures. Conduct cleanups and reclamation in accordance with the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan or the National Environmental Policy Act.

<b><i>Indian Trust Resources</i></b>
There are no Indian Trust Resource in the planning area. See Cultural Resources and Tribal Treaty Rights sections for discussion on traditional use areas and off-reservation treaty rights.
<b><i>Social</i></b>
<b>Goal – Provide for a diverse array of activities that result in social benefits while minimizing negative social effects.</b>  <b>Management Common to All Alternatives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Assess impacts of project proposals on a case-by-case basis. See objectives and actions in other sections.</li></ul>
<b><i>Tribal Treaty Rights</i></b>
<b>Goal –Accommodate treaty and legal rights of appropriate Native American groups in management of public lands.</b>  <b>Management Common to All Alternatives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Notify and consult with Native American tribes to provide for treaty uses of public lands.</li></ul>

**Table 13**  
**Summary Comparison of Impacts**

**RESOURCES***No Action (Alternative A)**Alternative B**Alternative C**Alternative D****Air Quality***

Air quality would be protected though short-term impacts could occur from fire events, prescribed fire activities, slash burning, or dust generated by activities such as motorized use or mining.

Same as Alternative A.

Same as Alternative A.

Same as Alternative A.

***Cultural Resources***

Provides protection and attention to cultural resources through both Section 106 compliance activities and proactive management.

Provides more protection and attention to cultural resources than A and D. Would increase amount of cultural resource information base through increased proactive inventory, but less inventory than Alternative C.

Provides the most protection and attention to cultural resources. Provides the largest increase in cultural resource information with more proactive inventory than A, B, or D.

Provides less protection and attention to cultural resources than B and C, but focuses on priority watersheds to provide for more comprehensive management in concert with other resources.

More designated motorized routes in this alternative provide the most access to areas where indirect impacts can occur from vandalism, etc.

Provides better protection from indirect impacts resulting from designated motorized routes than A or D, but less than C.

Least number of designated motorized routes provides best protection from indirect impacts to cultural resources.

Provides better protection from indirect impacts related to use of designated motorized routes than A but less than B or C.

***Fish and Wildlife******Fish***

Would take longer than Alternatives B and C to achieve DFC.

Would reach DFC sooner than Alternative A, but after Alternative C.

Would achieve DFC before all other alternatives.

Would achieve DFC about the same time as Alternative B.

Protects fish habitat using watershed planning and rangeland health standards, implementing habitat improvements projects where site-specific assessments have identified habitat concerns.

Similar to Alternative A, but provides additional protection to Class I streams to improve fish habitat.

Similar to Alternative B, but provides additional focus on special status species.

Same as Alternative A.

<b>Wildlife</b>				
	Would reach DFC in longer timeframes than Alternatives B and C.	Would reach DFC more quickly than Alternatives A and D, but less quickly than C.	Would reach the DFC before other alternatives.	Would take the longest to reach DFC.
	Overall wildlife habitats would be maintained and conditions enhanced as individual projects and plans are developed and implemented.	Forested and sagebrush habitats would be enhanced but with a higher risk than Alternatives A and C of localized wildlife displacement. The loss of certain wildlife species and uses due to more active and widespread modification of forested communities, particularly in focus areas would also be greater than in Alternatives A and C. Short-term habitat losses and wildlife displacement would be compensated by increased habitat diversity over the long-term.	Wildlife habitat would sustain the least human-caused disturbance, with natural disturbances and succession having a greater influence on habitat conditions. Wildlife species dependent taller and denser plant communities with more structure would benefit.	More widespread impacts to forest and sagebrush habitats would occur under this alternative with highest risk of wildlife displacement and disruption of seasonal uses. Improvement in riparian/wetland habitat conditions would be slow.
		Riparian and wetland habitat would be actively managed to meet DFCs but improvement would be slower than Alternative C.		
<b>Geologic Resources</b>				
	Unique geologic features would be protected from locatable mineral activities.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.	Same as Alternative A.
<b>Paleontological Resources</b>				
	Similar to impacts described for Cultural Resources.			

<i>Soils</i>				
	Greatest risk for soil erosion due the greatest number of miles of routes designated for motorized use.	Fewer miles of designated routes would result in less risk of erosion than in Alternative A.	Potential for erosion would be the least over the life of the plan under this alternative since the fewest number of miles of roads would be designated as open to motorized travel.	Potential erosion resulting from routes designated for motorized travel would be more than in Alternatives B and C, but less than Alternative A.
	Streambank erosion would be greatest under this alternative given the miles of riparian areas in NF and FAR condition.	Streambank erosion would decrease under this alternative as riparian conditions improve.	Streambank erosion would be of least concern under this alternative.	Streambank erosion would be alleviated over the long term based on proposed riparian management.
	Some soil erosion from vegetation treatments would occur until vegetation regenerates.	Soil erosion from vegetation treatments would be greater than Alternative A and C, but less than Alternative D. Impacts would first occur in three focus areas.	Soil erosion from vegetative treatments would more than Alternative A but less than Alternatives B and D.	Soil erosion from vegetation treatments would be the greatest under this alternative given the number of acres proposed for treatment under this alternative.
<i>Special Status Species—Animals</i>				
	Habitat suitability and conditions would be protected and improved in specific areas.	Habitat suitability and conditions would be enhanced across broader areas of the landscape.	Similar to Alternative B.	Habitat suitability and conditions have the most potential to be altered due to vegetation treatments proposed in this alternative.
	Impacts to special status species movement and migration would be more likely to occur with localized case-by-case management.	Management of corridor areas to prevent fragmentation would enhance habitat and linkages available for special status species.	Impacts from management of wildlife corridors would be the same as Alternative B with some additional protection for wolves and grizzly bear movement.	Same as Alternative A.
		Specific management for special status species emphasizes habitat protection and improvements for grizzly bear, sage grouse, and migratory birds on a broad scale.	Management enhances habitat condition and availability for special status species the same as Alt. B but also emphasizes more specific habitat protection and improvement for sensitive species on a broad scale.	Management would benefit grizzly bear most, and other special status species to a lesser degree.

***Special Status Species–Fish***

Would take longer to reach DFC.

Would achieve DFC in less time than Alternative A and D, but longer than Alternative C.

Would achieve DFC in the shortest amount of time.

Would achieve DFC in similar timeframes to Alternative B.

Uses conservation strategy to manage and protect westslope cutthroat trout habitat.

Same as Alternative A, but also protects concentrated spawning areas in streams with westslope cutthroat trout populations of 99% and greater purity.

Provides protection for WCT streams with 90% and above pure populations by withdrawing those streams from mineral entry and in management of WCT spawning and fry emergence habitats.

Same as Alternative A.

***Special Status Species–Plants***

Protects special status plants using watershed planning and rangeland health standards.

Provides additional protection for special status plants by minimizing surface disturbance from authorized activities and by implementing habitat management plans for priority species in riparian/wetland habitat and in sagebrush-steppe habitats.

Provides more protection for special status plants than Alternatives A and B by implementing habitat management plans on a broader scale specifically for plant values.

Impacts would be similar to Alternative B.

Increases information base on special status plants by partnering with others performing inventory on public lands.

Increases information base on special status plants to a greater degree than Alternative A through inventory of project areas as well as through partnerships.

Same as Alternative B.

Same as Alternative B.

***Vegetation—Forests and Woodlands***

DFC would be achieved over longer periods of time than in Alternatives B and D.

Emphasis on treatment of vegetation that has missed two or more fire cycles would restore a more natural fire regime on a localized basis, mainly in the Pioneer and Gravelly landscapes.

Aspen would be restored in particular areas over time.

Forest and woodland vegetation within WSA boundaries would continue to evolve with fire suppression.

Would achieve DFC more quickly than Alternatives A and C, but less quickly than Alternative D. More acres of Douglas-fir (warm/dry) forest types would be treated than in Alternative A, but less than proposed in Alternative D.

Three areas identified as priorities for treatment

- southern Rubys
- south Tobacco Roots
- Barton/Idaho Gulch

would be restored sooner than other areas in the DFO.

Would treat more acres for aspen restoration than Alternative A, but less than Alternative D.

Wilderness values could be enhanced over the long term by vegetation treatments that would return forest and woodlands in these areas to a more natural fire regime.

DFC would be achieved most slowly, treating fewer acres in most forest types, some not at all, and by limiting the types of tools that can be used outside of aspen restoration and wildland-urban interface areas.

Would restore the same amount of aspen over time as in Alternative B.

Wilderness values could be enhanced with the use of prescribed natural fire.

Would achieve DFC sooner than other alternatives, treating the most acres in all forest types and using all tools.

Aspen would be restored to a slightly greater degree under this alternative.

Wilderness values could be enhanced over the long term as in Alternative B.

***Vegetation—Invasive and Non-native species, including Noxious Weeds***

Introduction and spread of noxious weeds would continue.

Noxious weed threats would be reduced by using all tools and strategies to control weeds.

Similar to A, but risks of impacts to values such as special status plants, occupied pygmy rabbit habitat, sage grouse breeding habitat, and mountain mahogany habitats would be weighed against noxious weed risks when determining control strategies.

Prohibition of aerial application of herbicides and pesticides could increase costs and possibly reduce effectiveness of noxious weed control in specific areas.

Impacts would be similar to Alternative A, except the potential for the greatest amount of disturbance under this alternative could increase the introduction and spread of weeds to a greater degree than any of the other alternatives.



***Vegetation–Rangelands***

DFC would be achieved over longer periods of time than in Alternatives B and D.

Would achieve DFC more quickly than Alternatives A and C, but less quickly than Alternative D, allowing use of all tools as appropriate.

DFC would be achieved most slowly, treating vegetation to mimic specified fire return intervals with limited tools for most habitat types in areas outside of aspen restoration and wildland-urban interface areas.

Would achieve DFC sooner than other alternatives, treating the most acres in all shrub types using all tools.

Three areas identified as priorities for treatment

- southern Rubys
- south Tobacco Roots
- Barton/Idaho Gulch

would be restored sooner than other areas in the DFO.

***Vegetation–Riparian and Wetlands***

Riparian habitat conditions would be managed for PFC with improvement occurring as individual projects and plans are developed and implemented.

This alternative would provide faster improvement than Alternatives A and D toward DFC by actively manipulating vegetation communities and implementing grazing management designed to meet DFC.

Riparian and wetland habitat would sustain the least human-caused disturbance and achieve DFC before the other alternatives. Natural disturbances and succession would have a greater influence on habitat in this alternative.

Progress toward DFC would be slower than Alternatives B and C.

Progress toward DFC would be the slowest under this alternative because riparian areas would be managed for PFC in many cases and not for DFC.

Alternative C would provide the most rapid improvement in riparian/wetland condition by implementing some of the same vegetation restoration projects as in Alternative B combined with the effect of not grazing some habitats, implementing rest or deferred grazing treatments or limiting forage utilization by livestock.

Limiting riparian restoration treatments to only aspen types would also slow progress toward DFC.

**Visual Resources**

Visual quality could be impaired, especially in areas of mineral development and vegetative treatments.

Visual quality could be impaired as in Alternative A, but application of management objectives and rehabilitation measures would reduce impacts.

Visual quality would most likely remain the same as at present under Alternative C management, except for increased potential for catastrophic fire events.

Visual quality would deteriorate the most under this alternative given the greatest amount of disturbance proposed to manage other resources and provide for uses and the increase in acres assigned to VRM Class IV compared to Alternatives B and C.

**Water**

Achieving water quality goals with proposed riparian management would take the longer than Alternatives B and C, but probably less time than Alternative D.

Potential for water quality impacts would be less than D, but more than those projected under Alternatives B and C given the mix of uses and surface disturbing activities proposed in those alternatives.

Continued fire suppression could result in an increase in erosion resulting from wildfire because fuels would continue to accumulate and increase the chance of large wildfires.

Water quality goals would be attained more quickly than Alternatives A and D but less quickly than Alternative C.

Increasing surface disturbance from vegetation treatments and other actions could increase short term impacts under this alternative in comparison to Alternative A. Reducing the number of miles of roads open to motorized use would decrease the potential for water quality impacts from erosion.

Under this alternative erosion resulting from wildfire would be moderate in comparison to Alternatives C and D. This is because the combination of fuels reduction and vegetation treatments would be more moderate than for Alternative C and D.

Water quality goals would be achieved most quickly under this alternative.

Potential for water quality impacts would be the least compared to other alternatives given that less surface disturbing activities would occur under this alternative.

Erosion resulting from wildfire would be similar to Alternative A.

Water quality goals would be achieved in the greatest length of time.

The greatest potential for short term impacts to water quality would occur under this alternative from reduction of surface cover due to vegetation treatments and forest product activities, as well as other surface-disturbing activities such as mining.

Erosion resulting from wildfire would be the least under this alternative because the combination of fuels reduction and vegetative treatments would be the greatest.

**Wild Horses and Burros**

There are no wild horse or burro herds within the planning area.